Best of Dragon™ Vol. II

Monthly adventure role-playing aid

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Best of Vol. II

Monthly adventure role-playing aid

A collection of creatures and characters, opinions and options from the first four years of DRAGON™ Magazine.

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Putting together a volume

of articles like this book is, in theory, a simple task. In practice, the task turned out to be only as simple as we chose to make it.

And we didn't make it especially easy on ourselves, the main reason that "Best Of" Vol. II was so long in the making.

These articles are reprints, to be sure — but many were revised. Outdated or irrelevant material was removed (that left more room for the *good* stuff, anyway). And it's hard for an editor to resist the temptation to tinker with an article when given a second crack at it.

The articles also look different than the first time around. Once we decided which to include (decisions prompted by readers' opinions), we opted to display those pieces originally — as parts of *this* whole, packaging related articles to share a similarity in appearance and presentation as well as subject matter, though they were first published years apart.

Accompanying these new-looking articles is new artwork: visions of NPC's by David Larson; ghoulish undead from Tim Truman; and a three-part scene from the imagination of Jack Crane. You've already seen the cover, John Barnes' distinctive dragon portrait that first appeared on the front of "Best Of" Vol. I. We brought it back for an encore — in a different color, but the change doesn't seem to have hurt it a bit. And we hope that's the way you'll feel about what you find inside.

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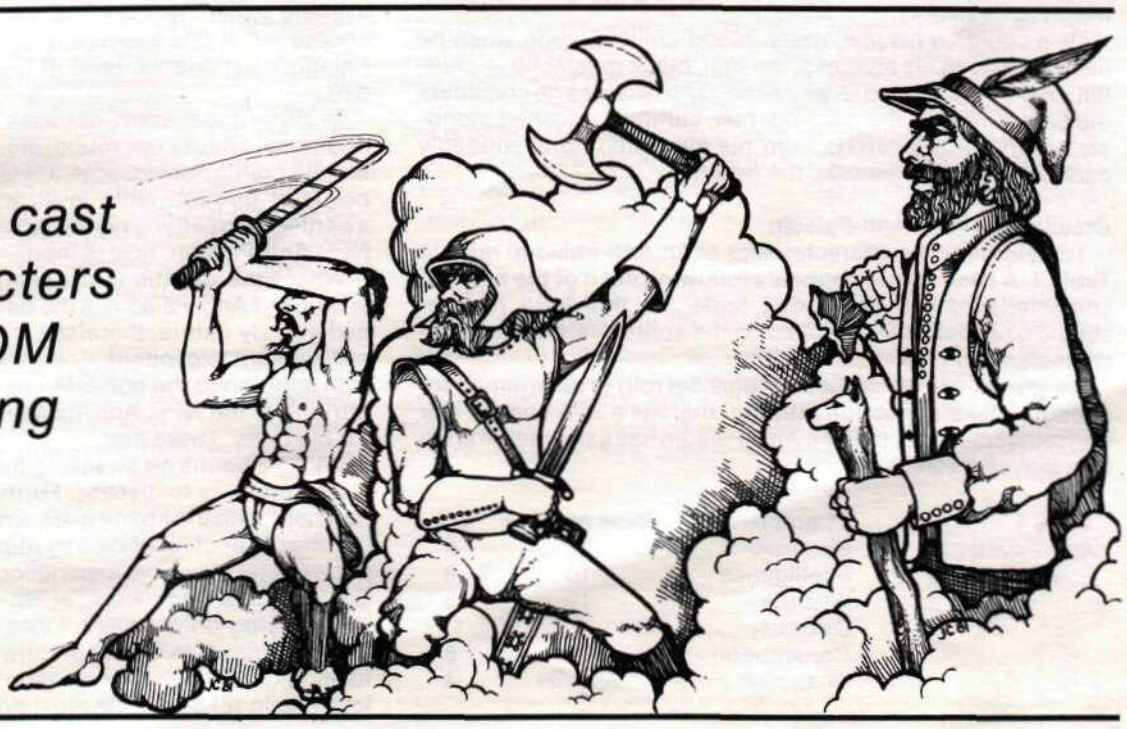
I. New NPCs (old favorites)

It's reasonable to assume that the term "non-player character" did not exist before the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game and other fantasy role-playing systems came into being. No previous game had provisions in its rules for players that weren't players. But in the D&D® and ADVANCED D&D® games, non-player characters are an important, if not essential, ingredient for an exciting and enjoyable adventure.

NPCs can be considered the DM's supporting cast — though that term is used advisedly. (It's hard to imagine an anti-paladin playing second fiddle to anybody.) They can enrich, or endanger, a party of adventurers. They may have powers and abilities far beyond those of player characters. At the very least, they can make life, ahem, interesting.

This section contains the best non-player characters from a span of three dozen issues of DRAGON™ Magazine. It includes the dreaded ninja, the most asked-for reprint in this volume, and the despicable anti-paladin, which has run a close second in reader requests. For that reason, we bent our own rules a bit to get this one in; it appeared in issue #39 of DRAGON Magazine, and we had intended to halt our selections at #38. But *we're* not the bad guys...

A supporting cast of real characters to help the DM create exciting adventures



JULY 1980: #39

The Anti-Paladin

by George Laking and Tim Mesford

Are the players in your campaign bored?

Has smiting the enemies of God and Mankind become a drag?

Now, add an element of surprise and unknown danger to your NPC encounters: Let the players meet an Anti-Paladin!

As an NPC, the Anti-Paladin represents everything that is mean, low and despicable in the human race. No act of treachery is too base, no deed of violence too vile for him. Thoughtless cruelty, sheer depravity and senseless bloodshed are his hallmarks: Chaotic and evil deeds are, in fact, his very lifeblood.

Obviously, through your many adventures and campaigns, you as a Dungeon Master have already acquired these traits. Now you can exploit your talents without restraint as you watch your players — especially those paladins — try to deal with *this* non-player character!

Recognizing an Anti-Paladin should be fairly easy for players. Perhaps it's his preference for black: black horse, black armor, black sword; or his grim, skull-shaped keep — raised in black basalt or gleaming obsidian — looming ominously against a gray, brooding sky on some chilly, windswept mountaintop.

Maybe it's the company he keeps: brigands, thieves and assassins, if his retainers are human; orcs, ogres, hobgoblins, and trolls if they're not!

Or it could be his low, nasty, blood-chilling laugh when he has the party in his clutches; the thin, black mustache — carefully waxed and curled — whose ends he twists as he considers the party's fate; or the gold-rimmed, carefully polished monocle which abruptly starts from his eye when he is suddenly confronted by his nemesis, the paladin.

Creating the NPC Anti-Paladin

To determine the characteristics of an Anti-Paladin, refer to Table 1. A base number appears following each of the first five characteristics shown on that table. To this base number should be added the sum rolled on the appropriate die for each characteristic.

If a result of 18 (base number plus die roll) is determined for strength, dexterity or constitution, there is a 25% chance (for each characteristic) that the Anti-Paladin has exceptional ability in that characteristic.

Table 1 *Anti-Paladin Characteristics*

Characteristic	Base number	Die
Strength	12	6
Intelligence	10	8
Wisdom	12	6
Dexterity	6	12
Constitution	10	8
Charisma	Special	4

Should one or more exceptional abilities exist, percentile dice should be rolled to determine the exact level of the exceptional ability and the appropriate bonuses. These bonuses are as follows:

Strength — as per the AD&D™ Players Handbook.

Dexterity — +4 on reaction/attacking; -5 defensive adjustment; three attacks per round for high-level Anti-Paladins.

Constitution — +4 hit points per experience level.

Charisma requires special treatment; true evil will either reveal itself in all its hideous ugliness or disguise itself behind a pleasant exterior. For this reason, Anti-Paladins tend to be either sinfully ugly (charisma of 4 or lower) or devilishly handsome (charisma of 17+).

To determine charisma, roll d4; a roll of 1 equals a charisma of 3, a roll of 2 corresponds to a charisma of 4, a roll of 3 equals a charisma of 17 and a roll of 4 equals a charisma of 18. On rolls of 1 or 4, there is a 25% chance that the Anti-Paladin has an exceptional charisma. If his charisma is exceptionally low, the Anti-Paladin will look as though he could break mirrors simply by glancing at them, and will automatically *Cause Fear* in men and animals whenever he reveals his face! An exceptionally high charisma, on the other hand, will instantly *Charm* men and many monsters, as the spell (animals and unintelligent creatures, however, are unaffected). In both cases, saving throws are applicable.

The experience level of the Anti-Paladin is based on the average experience level of the members of the party in the encounter. If this average is 10 or less, roll d10 for the Anti-Paladin's experience level. If the average is 11 or higher, roll d20.

In either case, apply bonuses — hit dice, "to hit" bonuses, additional attacks per round, etc. — to the NPC where applicable. Hit points, for example, are tabulated with one 10-sided die per level through ninth level, with three hit points per level awarded thereafter (123 hit points maximum for a 20th-level NPC Anti-Paladin, unless modified by constitution).

Where the paladin is the champion of all that is good and lawful, the Anti-Paladin is the defender of the powers of chaos and evil. By nature, therefore, his alignment is always chaotic evil, without exception!

In addition to the bonuses conferred on him by his personal attributes, the NPC Anti-Paladin also enjoys several benefits for his class. These are:

(1) A +2 bonus on all saving throws.

(2) Immunity to disease. Furthermore, the Anti-Paladin is a "carrier," with the ability to transmit the disease of his choice to the character of his choice by touch alone. He may do this once per week for every five experience levels he has acquired; i.e., at 1st-5th levels, once/week; at 6th-10th levels, twice/week, etc.

(3) Laying on of hands. Once a day, the Anti-Paladin may *Cause Wounds* in others or cure damage to himself, giving or healing two hit points of damage for each acquired experience level. As in (2) above, he must do this by touch alone.

(4) Protection from good. This aura — extending in a 1" radius around the Anti-Paladin — is magical "insurance" against the paladins, clerics and other characters of lawful good alignment who are constantly seeking to foil his nefarious schemes! For this reason, a *Detect Magic* spell will always register positive when cast aginst an Anti-Paladin.

(5) Thief's backstabbing ability. The Anti-Paladin receives a +4 bonus to hit, with double damage if he hits, whenever he attacks a victim from behind. Since he will only attack from a position of strength — usually above and behind, with dagger, sword or whatever is close at hand — backstabbing is the Anti-Paladin's preferred method of attack.

(6) Use of poisons. An aficionado of the fine art of poisoning, the Anti-Paladin favors the poisoned cup over armed combat in gaining his evil ends. If he absolutely must face an equal or superior opponent in open battle, he will be sure to envenom his blade to obtain a combat advantage.

Unlike an assassin, who only uses poison to get a job done, the Anti-Paladin considers poisoning to be both an esthetic pleasure and a means of artistic expression. Thus, the act itself must be artfully accomplished with finesse under the right conditions of mood, light and setting.

This does not mean that your Anti-Paladin cannot be free in his choice of reasoning for using a poison, however. For example, he might poison an enemy to gain a desired end; or to test a new poison distilled for him by his resident alchemist; or to determine if his stock of "vintage" poisons is still potent; or simply to see if he can get away with it!

Since poisoning is such an important expression of the Anti-Paladin's artistic nature, he will prefer to use two-stage and three-stage poisons when — or if — they can be obtained. (A multi-stage poison is any toxic chemical compound whose individual components are, of themselves, harmless and non-toxic. However, when combined — in a victim's stomach, for example — they produce a potent, if not virulent, poison. Such multi-stage poisons are completely undetectable, since they are harmless until mixed.)

As a case in point, consider the use of a three-stage poison —with liquid, solid and gaseous components in this example —by an Anti-Paladin to remove an obstructive town official. Inviting the man to his keep, he wines and dines him sumptuously, meanwhile serving him a drink laced with the first ingredient and a main course liberally sprinkled with the second.

Knowing that the first two ingredients are harmless without the third, the Anti-Paladin can safely eat and drink along with his intended victim, thereby putting the man's fears to rest.

Later that night, however, he would complete his fiendish plan by introducing the gaseous component into his victim's bedchamber (a candle treated with the third component is one possible means). Thus, the chambermaid will find the man in the morning dead in his bed "of natural causes," with no blame attached to the Anti-Paladin.

So long as the Anti-Paladin himself does not breathe the third (gaseous) component, the other ingredients will eventually pass through his system safely and harmlessly. In fact, he would have ample time to take an antidote (and prepare an ironclad alibi!) before completing his diabolical scheme.

Even without multi-stage poisons, the Anti-Paladin will always maintain a stock of standard poisons and their antidotes — the latter for his own personal use, of course!

The optional poisons suggested in the article *Poisons from AA to XX in issue #32 of DRAGON*™ Magazine are recommended. *(Editor's note: See page 72 of this volume.)* Table 2 (below) gives the chance by level for an Anti-Paladin to have a certain poison type in his "collection."

Finally, the Anti-Paladin also receives certain benefits at certain experience levels, in addition to his class benefits. These are as follows:

(1) At third level and above, the Anti-Paladin affects the undead, devils and demons as if he were an evil cleric. For each experience level he gains, this ability increases by one; i.e., a 4th-level Anti-Paladin would affect undead as a second-level evil cleric, a 5th-level as a third-level evil cleric, etc.

At this level, his sordid reputation for pure, unadulterated evil is such that undead or other evil creatures will actually seek him out in order to enter into his service! Table 3 details the percentage chance by experience level that an NPC Anti-Paladin will have non-human retainers of these (or other) types.

(2) At fourth level and above, the Anti-Paladin may have acquired a special warhorse (refer to Table 3). Usually, this beast is an intelligent, heavy warhorse with AC5, 5+5 hit dice, and the speed of a medium warhorse (18"). If the Anti-Paladin has such an animal, there is an additional 25% chance that it is, in reality, a Nightmare as outlined in the AD&D Monster Manual. Invariably — no matter what type of horse the Anti-Paladin rides — these beasts will be red-eyed and coal-black, doing double damage whenever trampling the weak, helpless and aged underfoot.

Table 2
Poisons Available by Experience Level Anti-Paladins

Experience Level	Poison Type													
	AA	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	S	X	XX
1	5%	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2	10	5%	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
3	15	10	5%	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
4	20	15	10	5%	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5	25	20	15	10	5%	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
6	30	25	20	15	10	5%	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
7	35	30	25	20	15	10	5%	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
8	40	35	30	20	25	15	10	5%	—	—	—	—	—	—
9	45	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	5%	—	—	—	—	—
10	50	45	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	5%	—	—	—	—
11	55	50	45	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	5%	—	—	—
12	60	55	50	45	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	5%	—	—
13	65	60	55	50	45	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	5%	—
14	70	65	60	55	50	45	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	5%
15	75	70	65	60	55	50	45	40	35	30	25	20	15	10
16	80	75	70	65	60	55	50	45	40	35	30	25	20	15
17	85	80	75	70	65	60	55	50	45	40	35	30	25	20
18	90	85	80	75	70	65	60	55	50	45	40	35	30	25
19	95	90	85	80	75	70	65	60	55	50	45	40	35	30
20	100	95	90	85	80	75	70	65	60	55	50	45	40	35

(3) Beginning at ninth level, the Anti-Paladin may employ a limited number of clerical spells (see Table 4). Due to his unflinchingly evil nature, these spells will always be the reverse or evil type whenever possible.

Since Anti-Paladins are a sub-class of fighter, they may only use those scrolls, potions and magic items normally available and employed by characters of the fighter class.

Equipping the NPC Anti-Paladin

As an NPC, the Anti-Paladin will come fully equipped with armor, shield, weapons and horse. usually, his armor will be full plate or plate mail; his metal shield, large and sturdy; his weapons capable of inflicting maximum damage per blow against even heavily armored opponents (even without the use of poison); and his steed a heavy warhorse.

However, in order to present players with a formidable but not unbeatable foe, the DM may need to adjust the Anti-Paladin's equipment according to his experience level, the number of his retainers present, the experience levels/types present in the party encountering him, and the general situation at hand.

For example, a 20th-level Anti-Paladin defending his castle with a full complement of human and non-human retainers about him might wear only chainmail, carry a small, wooden shield and wield a mace or longsword. The same Anti-Paladin, on the other hand, if encountered in the wilderness with only a small party of retainers for protection, might wear banded or scale armor, carry a small, metal shield and use a morningstar or broadsword.

Keep in mind that even when alone, the Anti-Paladin is one very tough customer at any level. Give him a few poisons, let him make one or two backstabbing attacks, throw in a special warhorse, a body of human/unhuman troops and a castle, and you have an opponent which even the foolhardy will hesitate to attack.

For this reason, the DM's discretion is strongly advised before assigning this NPC any magical items whatsoever.

If players are sufficiently strong in experience levels, hit points, magic items and sheer numbers, and the DM feels he/she absolutely must provide the Anti-Paladin with such items, the "Party Magic Items" section in Appendix C of the AD&D Dungeon Masters Guide is suggested as a source ... but not recommended, for the reasons already stated.

Each item chosen from that table should be weighed carefully for the advantage given to the NPC. A 20th-level Anti-Paladin wearing +4 plate, carrying a +3 shield and wielding a +4 Defender sword is just too deadly to consider!

The single exception to this rule is the Anti-Paladin's "Unholy Sword." (Table 3 outlines the percentage chance by experience level that the Anti-Paladin has acquired such a sword in the

---

Table 3
Anti-Paladin (Fighter) Table

Experience level	Level title	Horse (a)	Unholy sword (b)	Human retainers (c)	Non-human retainers (c)	Freehold
1	Caitiff	—	5%	100%	—	5%
2	Miscreant	—	10	95	5%	10
3	Malefactor	—	15	90	10	15 (Manor)
4	Hellraiser	5%	20	85	15	25
5	Blackguard	10	25	80	20	30
6	Scoundrel	15	30	75	25	35
7	Dastard	20	35	70	30	40
8	Villain	25	40	65	35	45
9	Villain of the Deepest Dye	30	45	60	40	50 (Keep)
10	Fiend	35	50	55	45	60
11	Anti-Paladin	40	55	50	50	70
12	Anti-Paladin, 12th level	45	60	45	55	80
13	Anti-Paladin, 13th level	50	65	40	60	90
14	Anti-Paladin, 14th level	55	70	35	65	100 (Castle)

Notes:
(a) 25% chance horse is Nightmare. (b) 25% chance sword is Unholy Reaver. (c) See 3a/3b or 3c/3d for type.

Table 3a
Human retainers

Die roll	Type	Number
01-50	Brigands	1-3
51-80	Thieves	1-2
81-99	Assassin	1*
00	Roll on Table 3b	

Table 3b
Human retainers (Special)

Die roll	Type	Number
01-50	Cleric	1*
51-80	Alchemist	1*
81-99	Magic User	1*
00	Roll twice on Table 3a	

Note on Tables 3a/3b:
* - If more than one retainer of this type is rolled, treat the additional ones as novices or apprentices of that class.

Table 3c
Non-human retainers

Die roll	Type	Number
01-49	Goblin	3-12
50-69	Orc	2-9
70-79	Hobgoblin	2-7
80-90	Gnoll	2-5
91-94	Ogre	1-3
95-97	Troll	1-2
98-99	Giant	1
00	Roll on Table 3d	

Table 3d
*Non-human retainers (Special)**

Die roll	Type	Number
01-95	Undead (any except lich or vampire)	Variable
96-97	Devil	one only
98-99	Demon (Types I-VI)	one only
00	Roll twice on Table 3c	

* - The DM determines when and how these freehold guardians are activated. (Roll only if Anti-Paladin has a freehold.)

course of his perfidious career). When this sword is unsheathed, it will project a 1" diameter Circle of Power around the Anti-Paladin. This allows the Anti-Paladin to dispel magic at a level of magic use equal to his own experience level.

If he has acquired an Unholy Sword, there is an additional 25% chance that it is, in reality, a +5 *Unholy Reaver.* (Undoubtedly, the Anti-Paladin has obtained this sword by murdering its previous owner!)

The Unholy Reaver has several powers:

(1) Imparts a 50% magical resistance to everything within a 5" radius. Note that the Anti-Paladin must be holding the sword unsheathed in order for this power to operate.

(2) Dispels magic in a 5" radius at the level of magic use equal to the experience level of the Anti-Paladin wielding it. Again, the sword must be in the Anti-Paladin's hands, unsheathed, in order to perform.

(3) Inflicts +10 damage points in addition to normal damage, but only when used by the Anti-Paladin against opponents of lawful good alignment.

Only in the hands of an Anti-Paladin will these powers and bonuses apply. If wielded by a character of evil alignment, the Unholy Reaver will simply act as a normal +2 sword. A character of any other alignment so unfortunate as to acquire an Unholy Reaver will discover that it will always perform as a -2 Cursed Sword!

Retainers, human and otherwise

The Anti-Paladin may or may not have retainers (refer to Table 3 for the percentage chance by experience level that he has acquired a body of human/non-human servitors). Note that human, demi-human and mixed human races are classified together under the heading of "human" retainers.

Based on the type of encounter the DM foresees when designing an Anti-Paladin, he/she will have to determine the exact "mix" of races to be found amoung his human companions. Obviously, only beings of the most vicious and unsavory character will willingly serve an Anti-Paladin!

Thus, half-orcs will commonly be found serving in the capacity of assassins, half-ogres — if that variant is employed — will perform as fighters (brigands), while an occaional renegade dwarf or depraved halfling might be numbered as thieves in the Anti-Paladin's service.

On the other hand, no self-respecting elf — not even a thief —would ever serve such an evil master (although, under certain conditions as determined by the DM, a solitary Drow might be found acting in the role of "advisor").

Brigands, thieves and assassins are the Anti-Paladin's usual human companions. Occasionally, he might have on hand a defrocked cleric to act as his chaplain, an outlawed alchemist to brew up his poisons or a demented wizard to keep him well supplied with potions, scrolls and other magic items (see Table 3b for details on these "special" human servants).

No sage, however, will ever be found serving an Anti-Paladin. As a class, sages are too wise to associate willingly with such an unprincipled and deceitful character.

An Anti-Paladin may not maintain more than 20 human servitors, decreasing that number by one for each additional experience level of the particular Anti-Paladin. Thus, a first-level might have up to 20 human retainers, while a 20th-level Anti-Paladin would have but one. It should also be obvious that, if the Anti-Paladin has established some type of freehold — whether manorhouse, keep or castle — he will have some kind of retainers (human and/or non-human) to both maintain and defend it.

The experience level of an Anti-Paladin's human servant will always be at least one level lower than that of the master, if not more. The main reason for this is the Anti-Paladin's inborn distrust and suspicion of everyone, even his own bodyguards.

For not only does the Anti-Paladin enjoy lording his position and power over lesser men, but he simply will not tolerate anyone being his equal in anything — perhaps for good reason, since a cleric, magic-user or assassin of equal ability might be tempted to displace the Anti-Paladin by taking command!

Thus, an 8th-level Anti-Paladin, for example, might have a single 7th-level type serving him in the capacity of lieutenant. However, he is much more likely to have a body of 1st through 4th-level types whom he can bully, mistreat and dominate through fear and his own iron will.

The only exception to this general rule is the 1st-level Anti-Paladin. Since zero-level thieves, assassins, clerics, magic-users and alchemists do not exist, the only retainers he can have are fighter (brigand) types, which will always be zero-level fighting men (5-8 hit points each).

Subject to the above, any method may be used to determine the experience levels of an Anti-Paladin's human retainers, from random die rolls to simply assigning levels to each NPC. The advantage of the latter method is that it allows the DM more control over the development of the encounter or scenario.

Beginning with second level, an Anti-Paladin is likely to attract a large and varied body of non-human retainers (see Table 3). Note that the probability for non-human servitors increases with each additional experience level of the Anti-Paladin. There are several reasons for this:

(1) The Anti-Paladin actually prefers non-human retainers over human types, since they are less apt to mutiny against his sadistic, often brutal mistreatment of them. (Desertion, of course, is another matter, and may happen with any type of servant.)

(2) Relations between human and non-human servitors of the same Anti-Paladin are always strained at best, especially when undead are involved. Only the presence of the Anti-Paladin keeps both groups from going for each other's throats. Open violence between individuals in his retinue is a constant diciplinary problem for the Anti-Paladin when he has mixed types of human and non-human retainers.

(3) At higher levels of experience, the Anti-Paladin's infamous reputation for self-serving treachery, senseless violence and unswerving devotion to the cause of evil will actually deter all but the most vicious or psychotic human types from entering his service. For this reason, both the probability and the number of human retainers decreases with each additional experience level the Anti-Paladin gains.

To determine the actual type(s) of non-human servants the Anti-Paladin has acquired, consult Table 3c.

Anti-Paladins of 2nd or 3rd level will roll once on that table. Those of 4th-9th level will roll twice, 10th-14th level thrice, and those of 15th level and greater will roll the maximum of four times.

Thus, a 15th-level Anti-Paladin could have up to four different types of non-human servitors or a single, large troop of one type, depending on the die rolls. It is possible to have more types if "00" is rolled twice — first on Table 3c and again on Table 3d — but the probability is extremely low.

As with magical items, an Anti-Paladin's "special" non-human retainers — demons, devils and the undead — should be handled with extreme caution. These special types will almost always be confined within the walls of an Anti-Paladin's freehold. (If it is determined — by rolling on Table 3 — that he has not acquired a freehold, treat a "00" result on Table 3c as "roll again.") In no case, however, will a lich or vampire be found residing in an Anti-Paladin's freehold — at least, not as long as the freehold is inhabited! No special non-human servants will ever be found accompanying an Anti-Paladin on patrol.

Typically, the undead will be found acting as guardians or sentinels, usually in the Anti-Paladin's dungeon. As shown on Table 3d, both the type and number of undead servitors is variable, depending on the number of levels and extent of the Anti-Paladin's dungeon complex, the size and experience levels of the party in the adventure and other factors as determined by the DM.

An Anti-Paladin, for example, might have zombie footmen, valets and butlers as body-servants, performing these func-

Table 4
Spells usable by class and level Anti-Paladins (Fighters)

Experience level	Clerical spell level 1	2	3	4
9	1	—	—	—
10	2	—	—	—
11	2	1	—	—
12	2	2	—	—
13	2	2	1	—
14	3	2	1	—
15	3	2	1	1
16	3	3	1	1
17	3	3	2	1
18	3	3	3	1
19	3	3	3	2
20*	3	3	3	3

* - maximum spell capability

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tions in their usual mechanical fashion (thus, a direct order from the Anti-Paladin would make them attack).

Demons and/or devils may be found acting in any one of three roles: (1) as guardians of the Anti-Paladin's treasure(s); (2) as emissaries of the gods of chaos and evil, or (3) as special "advisors" to the Anti-Paladin. Within the walls of his freehold, therefore, they will usually be found either in the Anti-Paladin's dungeon, his freehold chapel or in a special room or library devoted to the study of diabolism and demonology.

The Dungeon Master must determine beforehand under exactly what conditions a demon or devil will appear, move or attack. For example, a demon/devil might appear if the party of adventurers performs (or fails to perform!) some action in a certain room or area of the Anti-Paladin's freehold.

Likewise, a demon/devil should be limited in its ability to move and attack by confining it/them to a specific room and/or the corridor immediately adjacent. With these limitations, you will prevent the adventure from becoming a slaughter of other characters.

Unlike player characters, the NPC Anti-Paladin may have an established freehold at any experience level, even 1st (consult Table 3 for the percent chance of this occurring). He will usually acquire this freehold in one of the three ways:

(1) By clearing out and repairing a previously abandoned structure.

(2) By evicting the tenants of an already established freehold (a pastime which is, by the way, one of the Anti-Paladin's principal forms of amusement), or

(3) By establishing his own freehold.

Whichever method he employs, his freehold will *always* be situated in a strong, easily defended location affording him the maximum opportunity for profit, mischief and mayhem.

He will be found, for example, along a well traveled caravan route at the only oasis in a parched and barren desert; or atop a commanding mountain position overlooking a strategic pass between two nations; or entrenched at a bridge or river crossing along some major trade route.

Obviously, the specific location, individual defenses and floor plans of an Anti-Paladin's freehold will depend on the type of scenario the DM is designing.

Provision should be made for at least one, if not more, secret escape passages, hidden rooms or bolt holes for the Anti-Paladin's use in case of emergency. All Anti-Paladins are great believers in the "live to fight another day" philosophy, especially when their own precious skins are endangered.

Finally, freeholds will have one or more dungeon levels — depending on their size — for the Anti-Paladin's amusement. As a rule of thumb, a manorhouse should have 1-2 dungeon levels, a keep 3-4 and a castle 5-6. More dungeon levels may be added, especially if the DM plans to use the scenario for a series of extended adventures.

The personality of an Anti-Paladin is a complete catalog of all the varied sins and crimes of humanity. He is treacherous, sly, underhanded, cruel, lecherous, sadistic, arrogant, greedy, vicious, egotistical, amoral, domineering, unprincipled, brutal, self-centered, diabolic, mean, petty, and vindictive.

Playing the Anti-Paladin

Unlike most evil types, the Anti-Paladin disdains "hack-and-slash" as a primary means of obtaining his goals, preferring the more subtle and devious approach of a Fu Manchu. As a case in point, consider the kidnapping of a local princess on the eve of her wedding to a foreign prince.

Naturally, our Anti-Paladin will demand a large, but not excessive ransom from her father for her safe return. However, when the emissaries arrive with the gold, they are ambushed by the Anti-Paladin's retainers (in disguise) and slaughtered to a man...save one. That one would be spared to carry the grim news back to the girl's father. At that point, the Anti-Paladin would send his regrets over the "loss" of the ransom money and the destruction of the caravan (undoubtedly by "bandits" or marauding orcs!), while renewing his original demand. Once this second ransom is paid, he would soon tire of the girl, selling her into slavery afterwards.

Thus, he would gain two ransoms and the price of a high-born slavegirl at virtually no risk to himself. Of course, daddy might show up on the Anti-Paladin's doorstep with an army and/or siege train in tow, but that's an occupational hazard.

The one really fatal flaw in the Anti-Paladin is his lack of courage. Despite his fearsome strength and formidable appearance, he is in reality a sniveling coward at heart!

So long as he is surrounded by his retainers while ambushing an inferior and outnumbered opponent, the Anti-Paladin's morale cannot be seriously questioned. However, when faced by his nemesis, the paladin; or a lawful good cleric; or any character of good alignment, there is an excellent chance that the Anti-Paladin's true nature will reveal itself.

Provided that these opponents equal or surpass him in experience, the Anti-Paladin must check his morale immediately upon facing any one of these types in single combat. He never need check initial morale against an inferior opponent or a foe not included in one of the categories mentioned above.

If the Anti-Paladin saves, he need not check morale again until he loses half his total hit points — or more — in the course of that particular melee (there are exceptions, see below). Note that this "morale check due to damage" is required, whether the Anti-Paladin is battling a single lawful good cleric or a party of neutral fighters.

Should the Anti-Paladin fail his morale check, however, he will immediately utter his famous battlecry: "Curses, foiled again!" and flee the field (if flight is possible) or surrender, if it is not. In any case, he will abandon both his human and his inhuman servitors to their richly deserved fate!

The base chance that the Anti-Paladin will act in such a cowardly fashion is 50% when facing a paladin, 25% against all others. This "rout factor" decreases by 5% for each retainer

within 60 feet (2" outdoors, 6" dungeon) of the Anti-Paladin.

The Anti-Paladin will react differently to each one of these three major types of opponent, as follows:

(1) Against characters of good alignment, the Anti-Paladin must check morale twice as noted above (i.e., upon joining combat with such a character for the first time and/or upon losing half or more of his total hit points in melee).

(2) When engaging a lawful good cleric, the Anti-Paladin must check morale as per (1) above. In addition, he must make a separate morale check after any round in which he takes damage from the cleric, either through the cleric's weapons or spells.

(3) When facing a paladin, the Anti-Paladin must check morale as if he were engaging a cleric; see (2) above. In addition, the Anti-Paladin's "rout factor" increases 5% for each hit point of damage scored by the Paladin's blows.

It should be obvious from the above that all Anti-Paladins will react in certain predetermined ways under combat conditions.

First, they will avoid personal combat — especially against those characters which are their extreme antithesis — unless or until it becomes absolutely necessary (leading from the rear has always been one of the Anti-Paladin's strongest points!).

Second, they will always use their retainers to bear the brunt of fighting and shield the Anti-Paladin from direct attack. Even above mundane profit, each Anti-Paladin's primary concern is his own precious skin.

If personally forced into action, the Anti-Paladin will go into battle with by as many retainers as possible. Not only does this bolster his own morale and distract his opponent(s); it also lets him slip away in the confusion if the fighting goes against him!

As can be seen, the personality of an Anti-Paladin is both complex and varied. While cowardice and greed, treachery and violence are frequently combined in the character of this most ignoble NPC, sometimes the innovative genius of Vlad the Impaler, the artistic sensitivity of Attila the Hun or the charm and hospitality of Lucretia Borgia is also displayed. No matter what his personality traits, however, the Anti-Paladin will always seek maximum profit with minimum of effort.

Scenarios for the Anti-Paladin

Several adventures have already been suggested in this article. The "Kidnapped Princess" scenario alone could be the basis of at least four separate adventures. For example:

* Rescue the princess from the Anti-Paladin's clutches and/or bring the Anti-Paladin in to suffer the king's justice.

* Accompany the first ransom caravan to the Anti-Paladin's keep and escort the princess home after her release (players, of course, must survive the Anti-Paladin's trap to defeat his plan!)

* Rescue the princess after the second ransom is paid out *before* the Anti-Paladin tortures and/or sells her into slavery (if the players arrive too late in either case, the DM could require them to return both ransoms and the Anti-Paladin's head to the king!)

* Accompany the king's army to the Anti-Paladin's castle and besiege it, killing or capturing the Anti-Paladin if possible (this adventure would allow the running of a small-scale miniatures battle). Clues could also be available, leading players to a pursuit of the slavers holding the princess.

Other adventures suggest themselves: A merchant prince might commission players to break an Anti-Paladin's stranglehold on local trade and commerce; a noble NPC fighter might enlist players in a desperate bid to regain his freehold from a usurping Anti-Paladin; or players might discover the ruins of an Anti-Paladin's castle and the entrance to his dungeons where — unbeknownst to them — the Anti-Paladin and his minions lie in suspended animation, guarded by a demon familiar!

Planning is the key to a successful adventure, even in random encounters. When the Anti-Paladin is encountered randomly, the DM must immediately answer these questions:

* Why is he there?

* Where did he come from and where is he going?

* Is this encounter deliberate on the part of the Anti-Paladin, or did the party surprise him in the act of committing some heinous crime against humanity?

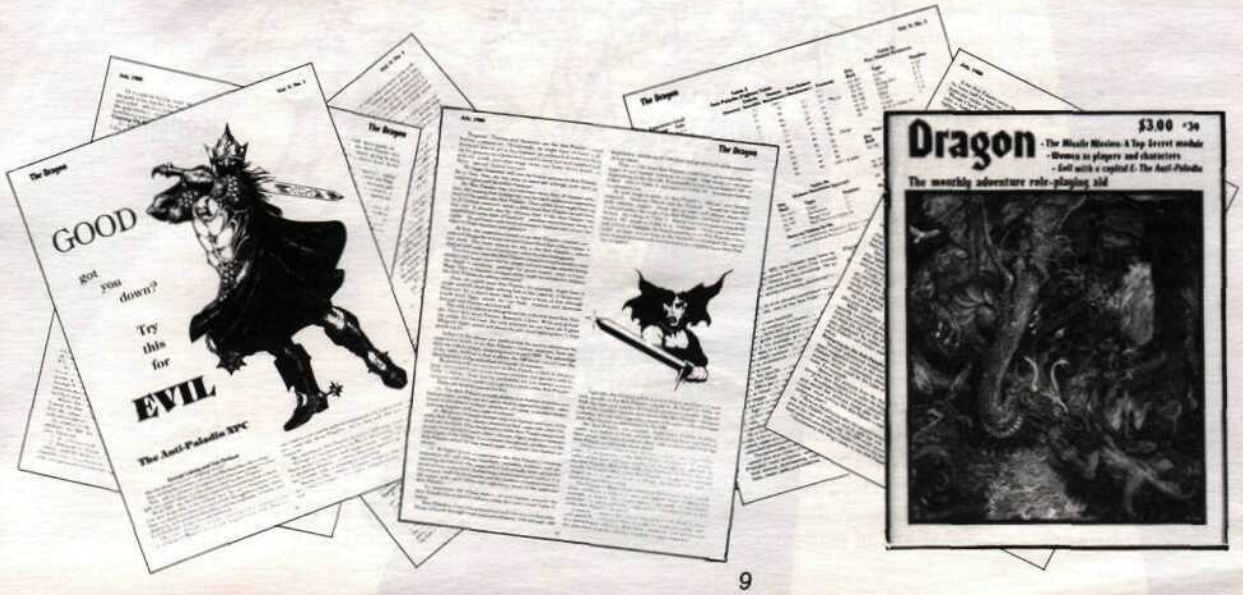
To a large extent, the answers to these questions will determine the Anti-Paladin's reaction to the party. Knowing the answers in advance can ensure a well-run encounter.

In some adventures, players may attempt to recruit the Anti-Paladin as a member of their group. This is not beyond the bounds of reason, but the DM must remember the Anti-Paladin is — above all else! — chaotic and evil. For the Anti-Paladin to even consider an offer, the goals and purpose of the group must serve chaos and evil. Due to his chaotic nature, he will serve such a party for the duration of one adventure only. Under no circumstances will an Anti-Paladin join — or even consider joining — a party containing lawful or good-aligned characters.

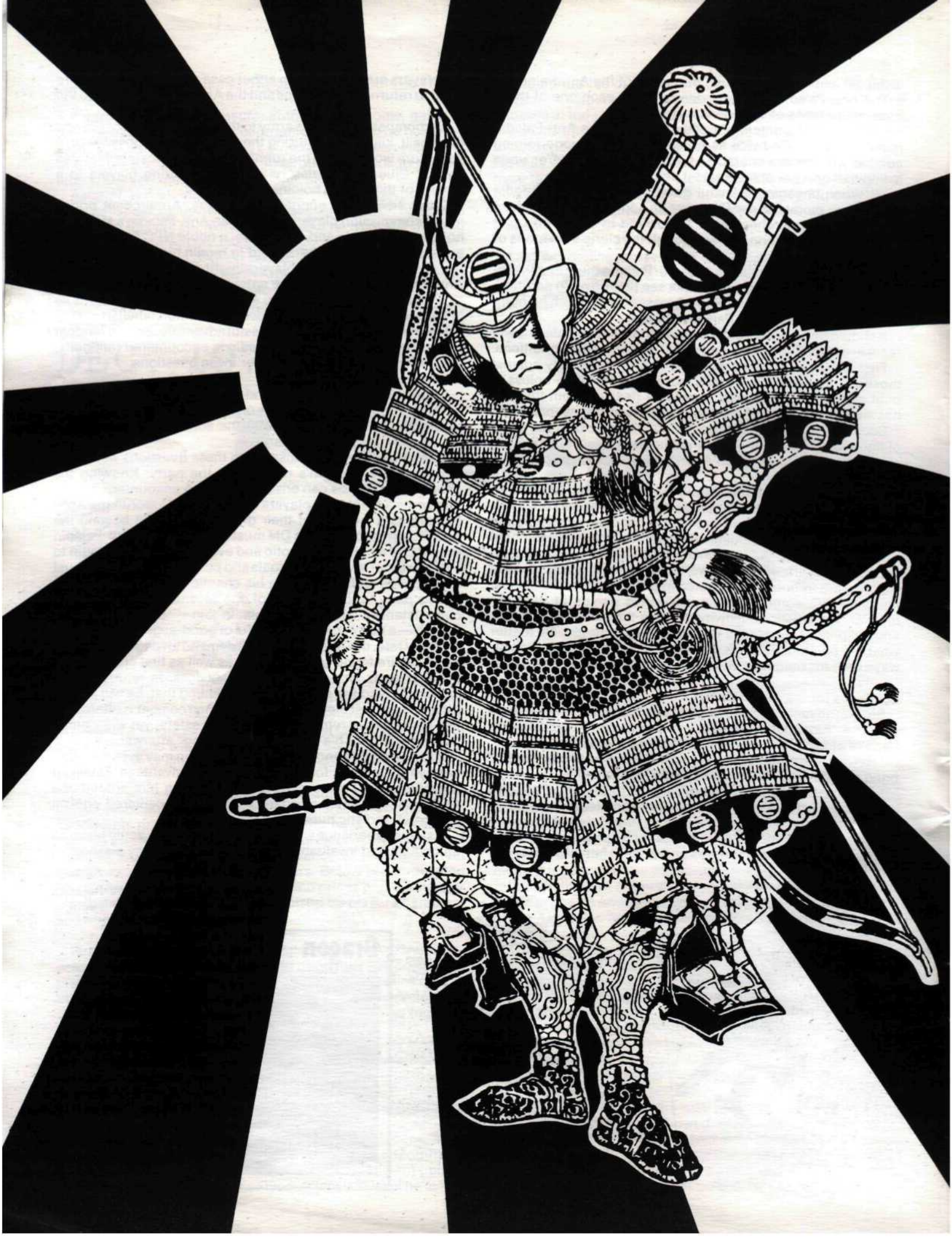
At any rate, the Anti-Paladin will demand an ungodly share of any treasure found (at least 50%), as well as first choice on all magical items, in payment for his services. In return, he will attempt to lead the party himself or, failing that, he will preach rebellion against the chosen leader. When combat is offered, he will immediately retreat to the rear for safety, yet will claim a hero's reward for his "courage and daring" afterwards!

If it is profitable enough, the Anti-Paladin may even consider betraying the party for his own personal advantage. Finally, if this still doesn't deter players from wanting him around, the Anti-Paladin's loud, arrogant manner, self-centered egoism and cruel, sadistic humor should.

A single experience with this NPC, therefore, should teach an immediate and invaluable lesson in caution to any players!



The Anti-Paladin: *Original layout, July 1980; issue #39*



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SAMURAI

by Mike Childers
as modified by Jeff Key

A subclass of fighters, these characters may be of any alignment but tend generally to be neutral. For a character to be a samurai, he must have a dexterity greater than 15. He will preferentially carry the traditional pair of Japanese swords (daisho) and the Japanese composite longbow. Further, his armor will always be such that it will maximize speed and protection, with protection being sacrificed for speed if necessary. If a samurai's *Katana* (long sword) is taken from him, he will either pursue a vendetta against the thief (or the thief's employers) or commit seppuku. The exact actions are very dependent on the situation.

Swords made in the manner of the Japanese blades are special, though non-magical. A samurai of average intelligence or greater (9+) will be able to identify blades of Japanese-type manufacture. With a higher than average intelligence (13+), a samurai can tell the exact type and character of a Japanese-type blade by examination. Each type of *Katana* or *Wakizashi* (short sword) has a basic type (0, 1, 2, or 3). The different blades are listed below.

All of these weapons lose one "step" (i.e., Type 2 becomes Type 1, effectively, but no weapon can be lower than Type 0) in the hands of a non-samurai. The swords may be used two-handed or one-handed by a non-samurai, but lose an additional "step" if used single-handed. Both weapons may be employed at the same time, one in each hand, by a samurai, and in such a case they may be employed against two different targets.

Optional "critical hit" rules

Whenever a samurai scores a sufficiently high number on a roll "to hit" with a samurai sword, he has struck a critical blow. An opponent will be critically struck any time a samurai's "to hit" roll is a certain amount greater than the minimum roll needed to hit. A samurai wielding a Type 0 katana or wakizashi, or a Type 1 wakizashi, will score a critical hit on a roll 8 or more above the minimum. (For example, if the samurai needed a "9" to hit, then a roll of 17 or higher would be a critical hit.) For a Type 1 katana or a Type 2 or Type 3 wakizashi, the required roll is 7 greater than the minimum. With a Type 2 katana it must be 6 greater, and with a Type 3 katana it must be 5 or more over the minimum number. In all cases, with all weapons, a critical hit is automatic on an unmodified "to hit" roll of 20, and it is also automatic on a roll of 19 with any weapon of Type 1 or better.

If a critical hit is determined, the DM should roll percentile dice and find the extent of the injury on the table below:

01-80 25% of hit points or 6 hit points (whichever is greater) are lost, and there is a 50% chance that an extremity will be cut off (40%) or rendered useless (60%). Roll d4 to determine which extremity: 1 = right arm; 2 = left arm; 3 = right leg; 4 = left leg.

81-95 50% of hit points or 12 hit points (whichever is greater) are lost, and a major body hit is scored (no additional damage other than hit points).

96-00 100% of hit points lost due to decapitation or other instant-kill blow.

Samurai armor

Japanese-style armor is closely related to European plate in protective value, but is lighter (45 pounds maximum) and less restrictive. The trunk, upper arms, and hips are covered by a series of small overlapping plates laced together. The lower arms, lower legs and feet are covered by a mixture of chainmail and plate. The neck, armpits and inside thighs have less protection than with European chainmail. There are also several grades of armor which are cost-related. A samurai very seldom uses a shield. The following table provides specifics on the five types of samurai armor:

Type	Armor Class	Encumbrance	GP value
E	6	400	40
D	5	400	75
C	4	575	150
B	3	675	300
A	3	625	600

Unarmed combat

A further ability of the samurai is unarmed combat. The present sport of judo closely resembles the knowledge and techniques that these fighters have at their disposal. Judo techniques are generally reserved for use against unarmed opponents, unless necessity dictates otherwise. Judo may be used by a samurai only if he has no weapon in his hands. When using judo, a successful "to hit" roll indicates that the opponent has been thrown, and it will take the opponent 1 or 2 melee turns to recover his feet. (Note: This assumes 10-second melee turns; adjust time if necessary.)

KATANA (long sword):

Blade approx. 30", weight approx. 3 lb.
Type 0: No bonuses to hit or damage; encumbrance 50gp; value 18gp.
Type 1: +1 to hit and damage; enc. 45gp; value 240gp.
Type 2: +2 to hit and damage; enc. 40gp; value 480gp.
Type 3: +3 to hit and damage; enc. 40gp; value 960gp.

WAKIZASHI (short sword):

Blade approx. 24", weight approx. 1¾ lb.
Type 0: No bonuses to hit or damage; encumbrance 28gp; value 16gp.
Type 1: +1 to hit and damage; enc. 25gp; value 200gp.
Type 2: +2 to hit and damage; enc. 23gp; value 400gp.
Type 3: +3 to hit and damage; enc. 23gp; value 800gp.

If a result of 19 or 20 is made on the "to hit" roll, the samurai may choose to score 1-4 points of damage on the opponent instead of achieving the throw. For every 4 levels advanced the probability of causing damage increases by 5% (e.g., a 4th-level samurai does 1-4 points of damage on a 18, 19 or 20; a 8th-level samurai can do damage on a 17, 18, 19 or 20; etc.).

On a roll of 20 a samurai may elect to subdue his opponent. For every 6 levels advanced the probability of subduing increases by 5%, in the same manner as inflicting damage.

The Japanese style composite bow or longbow (*Yumi*) may be fired while standing, kneeling or on horseback.

The Yumi has a cost of 75gp and an encumbrance of 50gp. A Japanese-style quiver will hold 20 arrows, and the quiver has an encumbrance value of 75gp. The quiver has a cost of 5gp, and each 20 arrows also costs 5gp.

The samurai's roll "to hit" with the Yumi is modified in most instances, depending on the armor class of the defender and the range at which the attack is taking place:

	Defender's armor class							
	2	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**
Short range	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+4	+4
Medium range	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+2	+2	+3
Long range	-4	-4	-2	0	0	+1	+1	+2

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HEALERS

by C. Hettlestad

Healers, as the name implies, are designed to allow rapid repair of other characters in large campaign games. Basically, the healer is a combination of magic-user and cleric with a dash of fighter. However, the healer has a set of spells exclusive to the class (although most of them can be found in other lists), and a healer is not allowed to change class at any time of his own volition.

Basic prerequisites for a healer are minimum scores of 15 each in intelligence, wisdom, and dexterity. Healers can only be lawful or neutral. A chaotic healer is not possible, and a healer would become a mere fighter if forced to change to that alignment.

Healers may not wear any armor or carry a shield, but may use any weapons and may use and be affected by any magical items. The various magical books, librams, and tomes to be found will not aid the healer in any way and can only be harmful. Special abilities are conferred upon the healer at certain levels, as follows:

At 4th level the healer can detect molds, slimes, etc. at a 40-foot distance.

At 8th level the healer can identify general types of potions.

At 12th level the healer can read magic-user and clerical scrolls.

At 16th level the healer can use four 1st-level magic-user spells, in addition to the healer spells listed below.

At 20th level the healer can use four 2nd-level magic-user spells, in addition to the healer spells listed below.

Healers can be of the human, dwarf, halfling, half-elf or elf races. Dwarven healers are limited to 10th level (Medic), while halflings, half-elves and elves can rise only as high as 14th level.

Healer spell list

1st level	2nd level	3rd level
1. Detect Magic	Neutralize Poison	Speak w/Dead
2. Detect Evil	Cure Disease	Cure Serious Wounds
3. Detect Poison	Purify Food & Drink	Cure Blindness
4. Detect Disease	Slow	ESP
5. Detect Invisibility	Haste	Animate Dead
6. Detect Phase	Invisibility	Strength

4th level	5th level	6th level
1. Stone To Flesh	Raise Dead	Improved Cure Serious Wounds
2. Mind Blank	Cure Insanity	Clone
3. Energy	Cure Paralysis	Water Breathing
4. Cure Lycanthropy	Longevity	Speak w/Plants
5. Awaken	Teleport	Speak w/Animals
6. Fly	Size Control	Speak w/Monsters

7th level

1. Sterilize
2. Neutralize Gas
3. Blade Barrier
4. Remove Curse
5. Remove Charm
6. Cure Deafness

Spell descriptions

1st level

1. Detect Magic: same as magic-user spell of same name.
2. Detect Evil: same as magic-user spell of same name.
3. Detect Poison: A spell that allows caster to determine if poison is present or is being used within a 30' radius, and where. It will also tell what type of poison.
4. Detect Disease: This spell will tell caster what disease (if any) is present within a 30" range.

5. Detect Invisiblity: same as magic-user spell of same name.
6. Detect Phase: A spell to find secreted treasure hidden by out-of-phase equipment (spells); and to find creatures that are out of phase; duration 6 turns.

2nd level

1. Neutralize Poison: same as cleric spell of same name.
2. Cure Disease: same as cleric spell of same name.
3. Purify Food & Drink: same as cleric spell of same name.
4. Slow: same as magic-user spell of same name.
5. Haste: same as magic-user spell of same name.
6. Invisibility: same as magic-user spell of same name.

3rd level

1. Speak with Dead: same as cleric spell of same name.
2. Cure Serious Wounds: same as cleric spell of same name.
3. Cure Blindness: same as cleric spell of same name.
4. ESP: same as magic-user spell of same name.
5. Animate Dead: same as magic-user spell of same name.
6. Strength: same as magic-user spell of same name.

4th level

1. Stone To Flesh: same as magic-user spell of same name.
2. Mind Blank: same as magic-user spell of same name.
3. Energy: Use of this spell will restore one life level to a character who has lost one to a wraith or similar happenstance.
4. Cure Lycanthropy: This spell allows user to remove the disease of lycanthropy from anyone so afflicted.
5. Awaken: This spell will awaken anyone put to sleep through any means.
6. Fly: same as magic-user spell of same name.

5th level

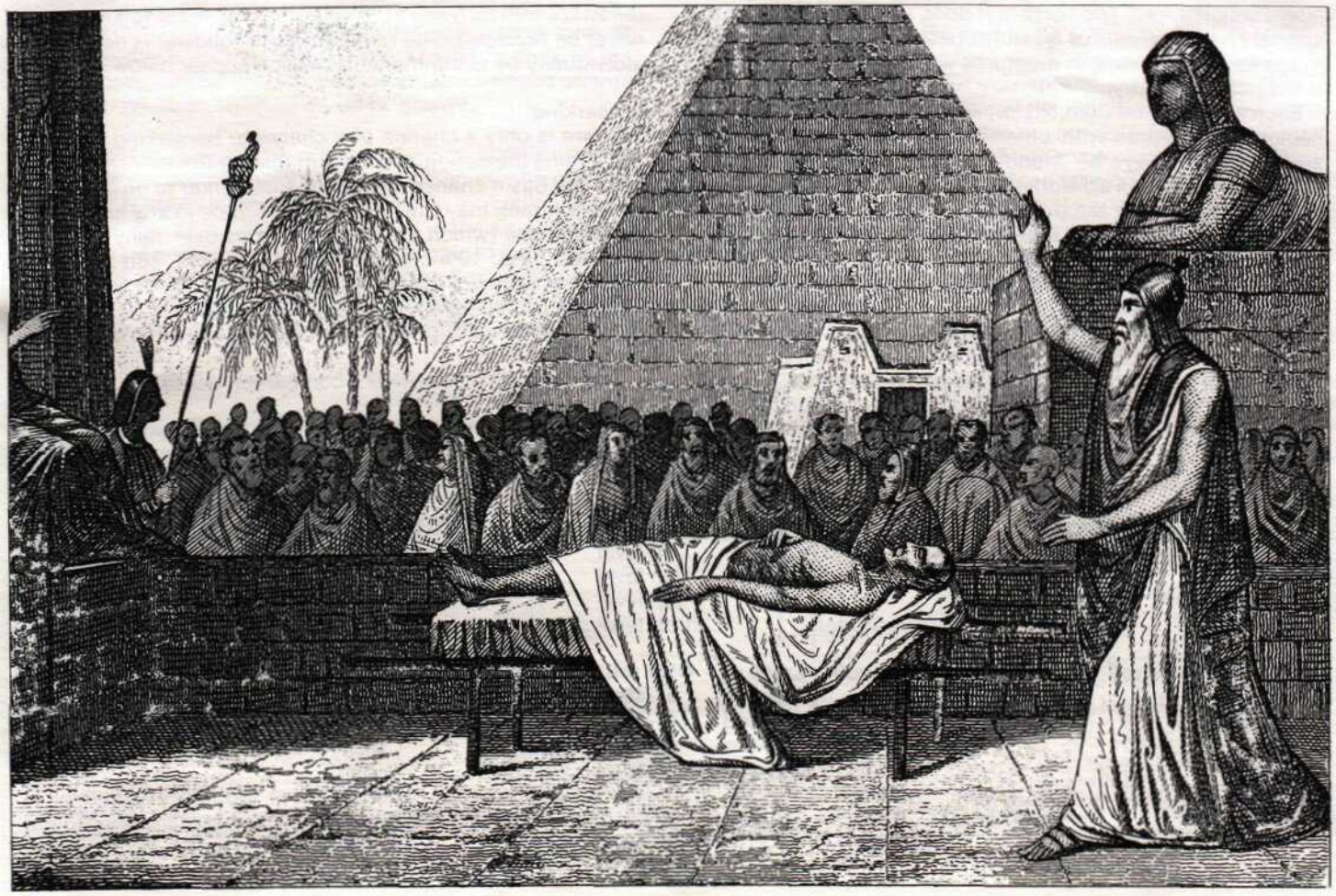
1. Raise Dead: same as cleric spell of same name.
2. Cure Insanity: allows caster to cure anyone of insanity.
3. Cure Paralysis: allows user of the spell to cure paralysis, or negate it in any effect.
4. Longevity: Removes 10 years from the age of the character this spell is cast upon (note: This will counter the effects of aging caused by a staff of withering, ghost attack, etc.).
5. Teleport: same as magic-user spell of same name.
6. Size Control: This spell will neutralize the effect of growth and shrinking potions or similar devices.

6th level

1. Improved Cure Serious Wounds: This spell will cure 4d6 worth of damage, with an bonus of one point per die (i.e., 8-28 pts.)
2. Clone: same as magic-user spell of same name.
3. Water Breathing: same as magic-user spell of same name.
4. Speak with Plants: same as cleric spell of same name.
5. Speak with Animals: same as cleric spell of same name.
6. Speak with Monsters: same as cleric spell of same name.

7th level

1. Sterilize: This spell will cleanse any room of any infection, or rid an area of mold, slime, or other nasty creatures of up to 5 hit dice.
2. Neutralize Gas: This spell will neutralize the adverse effects of poisonous or harmful gases.
3. Blade Barrier: same as cleric spell of same name.
4. Remove Curse: same as magic-user spell of same name.
5. Remove Charm: This spell removes or negates a charm placed upon a character; range 3".
6. Cure Deafness: This spell will cure deafness from any cause.



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BERSERKER

by Jon Pickens

Berserkers are a subclass of the fighter class. They are always human and always true neutral. A berserker's strength and constitution must both be greater than 9, while intelligence must be *less than* 9. At 1st level, a berserker's best allowable armor class is 6. Berserkers may use any magical items available to fighters, with the exception of magical armor and shields. In addition to any experience bonuses for strength, berserkers receive double experience points for kills until they earn their wereshape (see below). Berserkers will never have psionics.

Each berserker must become a shieldbrother in one of the following clans: Wererat, Werewolf, Wereboar, Weretiger, or Werebear. When the berserker earns his wereshape he will take that form when berserk, receiving all "to hit" and damage bonuses which apply. The berserker does not receive any of the special characteristics of lycanthropes, though while in wereshape he may melee with creatures which are only vulnerable to magical weaponry.

Each clan has one Clanmaster, with combat for this top spot being conducted as with other classes' hierarchies. Shieldbrothers will always be friendly and help each other when possible. Failure of a shieldbrother to do so results in outlawry and open season on the outcast. Neutral lycanthropes of the same type as the clan of a berserker will not attack the berserker, though they may refuse to give him aid. When the berserker earns his wereshape, he gains the ability to speak the lycanthropic language while in human form and communicate well enough empathetically with normal animals of his clan type to give simple commands which will be followed.

Since a berserker is careless of his person in battle, he relies on his gods to protect him from the fatal blow. Since the gods approve of brave deeds (we hope!), the more of them the berserker performs, the more protection he will receive. Therefore, for every two levels the berserker rises, his best allowable armor class is bettered by 1 (to 5 at 3rd level, 4 at 5th level, etc.).

Special abilities and restrictions

Level 1: Not allowed to hire anyone for anything. Innate ability to recognize alignment and clan of lycanthropes and other berserkers on sight.

Level 4: Reduce chance of being surprised by 1.

Level 6: Ability to detect hidden and invisible enemies. Gains a 4th-level companion who may be any neutral fighter type.

Level 10: The berserker may hire others, but hirelings are -2 on loyalty rolls and may never have a rating higher than 15.

Followers

At the appropriate level, the berserker will be joined by 2-12 followers with a loyalty of 16-plus. If killed, these followers may never be replaced. The nature of each follower is determined individually by using the tables which appear below.

Berserking

There is only a chance of a character berserking when the DM deems the conditions are suitable for the arousal of battle lust. The basic chance is 10% for a berserker to go berserk. A berserk attack may only be triggered once in any single incident of melee (which may be continuous over many rounds).

To the basic 10% chance of going berserk, add 20% if the berserker bites his shield (voluntary); add 10% for each round of melee (cumulative) that has passed; and add 10% for each follower or shieldbrother whose death he has witnessed during the current melee.

The death of a berserker's companion causes an automatic berserk state.

Advantages while berserking: Intelligent opponents must

Berserker clan limitations	Clan	Advance as	Gain wereshape	Gain followers	Max. HD	Clanmaster level
	Wererat	cleric	6th level	8th level	9	11th level
	Werewolf	druid	7th level	9th level	10	12th level
	Wereboar	druid	8th level	10th level	10	13th level
	Weretiger	fighter	9th level	11th level	11	14th level
	Werebear	fighter	10th level	12th level	12	15th level

Berserker followers, type & level	Dice roll	Class/type	Dice roll	Level of follower†	Dice roll	Special type
	01-60	Fighter			01-40	Berserker (Shieldbrother)
	61-70	Magic-user	01-50	2nd	41-65	Lycanthrope*
	71-80	Thief	51-65	3rd	66-75	Druid
	81-90	Cleric	66-80	4th	76-85	Bard
	91-00	Special (see table at right)	81-90	5th	86-90	Ranger
			91-99	6th	91-95	Hill giant
			00	7th	96-99	Stone giant
					00	Two rolls, ignore 00

* — Lycanthrope follower is always of same weretype as berserker.

† — Modifiers to dice roll for level of a lycanthrope follower: wererat -5%; weretiger +5%; werebear +10%.

check morale, if applicable. All attacks by the berserker are at +2 to hit, in addition to any strength bonuses. The berserker is immune to psionic attack while in a berserk state.

Disadvantages of berserking: A berserker may not withdraw from melee while berserk. A berserker remains berserk for as many melee rounds as he has points of constitution, but he attacks at -2 to hit and damage for the rest of the melee beyond that point. If in wereshape, he will maintain it for the duration of the melee even after returning to a normal (non-berserk) state.

If a berserker is still berserk at the end of a melee, there is a 10% chance per round thereafter (non-cumulative) that the berserker will turn on members of his own party. This chance should be rolled for each round until the berserk fit wears off or until the berserker is killed or rendered unconscious. Deduct 1% per level from this chance, down to a minimum of 1% for all berserkers except for Clanmasters, who will never turn on their friends.

The berserker must rest for a complete turn after each berserk fit, regardless of its duration.

Example: A werebear berserker of level 10 with a strength of 16 and a constitution of 10 will drop his weapons and attack as a werebear when berserk. Hit probability is +3, damage is 2-4/claw and 3-9/bite (3-17/hug), and armor class is 2 (7-5). After 10 rounds, the berserk fit will wear off and he will fight at -2, each claw doing 1 and each bite 1-6 (hug 1-14).

Four new sub-classes: *Original layout appeared in issue #3, October 1976*

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SCRIBES

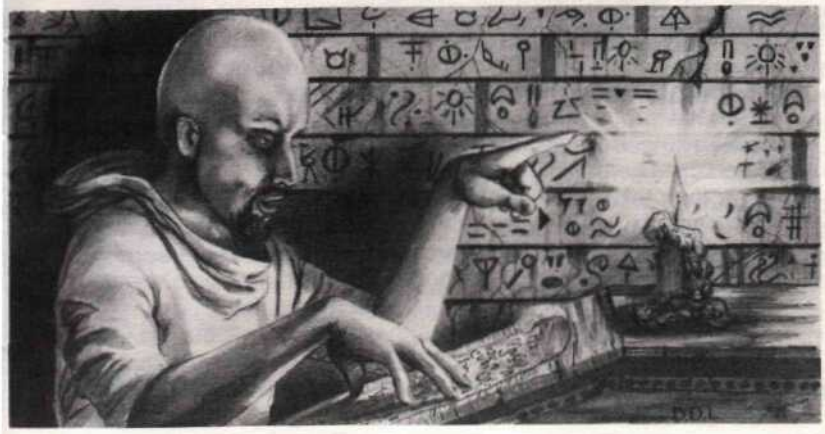
by David Mumper

Scribes are rather rare and expensive specialists who read and copy magical writing from scrolls and spell books into the spell books of magic-users. Only scribes can do this, because all magical writing is cursed with a spell that causes any character except a scribe to go permanently and incurably insane (*Remove Curse* notwithstanding).

Scribes are free-lancers who must be sought out, at a cost of 100-600 gold pieces per week. The chance of finding a scribe is 10% per week (cumulative); the DM may make adjustments based on the intended payment for services, the reason why a scribe is sought, etc. When a scribe is located, the DM secretly rolls percentile dice twice to determine alignment and abilities. Scribes are always neutral with respect to good and evil (01-70: lawful neutral; 71-90: true neutral; 91-00: chaotic neutral).

If the scribe goes insane (detectable only by *ESP* or similar means), all scribing attempts will contain errors. If the scribe's alignment differs from his employer, the chance of error doubles in a relationship between a true neutral scribe and a lawful or chaotic employer, and triples in a relationship between a chaotic scribe and a lawful employer, or vice versa. For every five spells successfully transcribed for the same employer, the scribe's ability rises by one "step" on the chart. Copying mistakes always cause adverse results when the spell is used. (Specific results are left to the DM's discretion.) Errors may only be corrected by another attempt at transcription.

Scribes charge 1,000-5,000 gold pieces per month while employed by another character. There is a 5% chance (cumulative) the scribe will leave at the end of each month, necessitating a new search by the would-be employer. Alignment differences double this chance of leaving.



Scribes: *Special abilities*

Die roll	Can scribe spells of:	% chance of error	%chance of insanity
01-25	1st-3rd level	25/75*	35*
26-50	1st-5th level	15/45*	25*
51-75	1st-6th level	10/30*	20*
76-85	1st-7th level	5/15*	15*
86-95	1st-8th level	2/6*	5*
96-00	1st-9th level	1/3*	0

* — When attempting spells beyond his level of ability.

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THE NINJA

by Sheldon Price

The ninja was a semi-mythical character in medieval Japan. He was feared not because he was terrifying, but rather because he was an unknown quantity. He could do things which the common people considered inhuman because of his special tools and training.

The ninja should not be an automatic character of terror in the game. While ninja did perform assassinations, that was by no means all they did. There is no reason why a ninja can not cooperate with lawful and good characters in the game. He does have much to offer.

These rules for ninja were based on the book *The Art of Invisibility: Ninjutsu* by Donn Draeger. The book was published in 1971 by Simpson — Doyle & Company; Shibuya P.O. Box 235; Shibuya-ku, Tokyo, Japan.

The ninja were grouped in families with a *jonin* as family head. Some jonin were heads of more than one family. Ninja had three ranks: Jonin (the family heads), *Genin (the normal field operatives who performed missions), and Chunin* (the middlemen who handled jonin-genin contacts and assigned missions). The genin loved to operate in bad weather.

Ninja are a special Oriental subclass of assassin. They are a combination of samurai, monk, thief, and assassin. They have trained since youth to master their art of ninjutsu. They are knowledgeable about poisons, are masters of disguise, have a virtually perfect sense of balance, have excellent night vision, and are very nimble.

Ninja are non-psionic.

Alignment: The alignment of a ninja is strict neutrality. This means that rather than worrying about grand cosmic balances, a ninja is interested only in what is good for himself. This makes it virtually impossible for a ninja to change alignment. Ninja are incorruptible in matters of alignment.

In all encounters involving a ninja and another thing or being, there is an automatic 20% chance that the being or thing encountered will consider the ninja to be of its own alignment. There is no penalty to the ninja if this does not result; the ninja will then be treated as a neutral for determining the response of the thing or being encountered. This applies to creatures, and to things such as swords. A ninja is able to simultaneously use, with no drawbacks if he makes the right rolls, swords of law, neutrality, *and* chaos. The probability is generated only once for each encounter. It is not generated each time an object with an alignment is touched. The effects of this ability (if it occurs) are permanent and are not altered by later events.

Languages: A ninja may know a number of languages equal to his intelligence score minus 6. All ninja share a secret language. They may learn, if they wish, the alignment languages of law, neutrality, and chaos.

Non-human and female ninja exist, though they are rare. Elves, dwarves, halflings and humans may become ninja.

A ninja may not be multi-classed. There is no limit by race as to how high a ninja may rise. No ninja may be higher than 16th level.

Abilities: A ninja has very good night vision. At first level a ninja gains the ability to see clearly up to 30 feet away. This range increases to 60 feet when the ninja reaches sixth level.

A ninja is very hard to surprise because of his intensive training. A ninja is surprised as are monks.

Ninja are also very good at tracking down their victims. A ninja tracks in similar fashion to a ranger, with a 20% deduction from the ranger's chance of success.

A ninja is able to simulate death — lowering body temperature, slowing heartbeat, and stopping breathing — for a number of turns equal to (1-6) × (level) + 1.

A ninja of higher than second level can travel up to 50 miles a day. A ninja of higher than sixth level can travel up to 75 miles a day. A ninja of higher than tenth level may travel up to 100 miles a day. These distances may be traveled without unduly tiring the ninja. These speeds are also subject to some modifications depending on the nature of the terrain.

Poisons: Ninja are very knowledgeable about poisons. A ninja is able to chemically brew poisons or neutralize poison broths as an alchemist three levels lower than the ninja.

Ninja have also studied the natural poisons available from animals and plants. A ninja may collect these to brew either poisons or neutralize-poison broths. The time required to do this is not more than one day for any brewing, and can be done rather inconspicuously.

There are two basic types of poisons: those that kill and those that paralyze (drugs). Poisons also come in three different rates of effect: instant (1-2 melee rounds), slow (10-60 melee rounds), and delayed (90-140 melee rounds), designating how quickly the poison takes effect.

Paralyzing poisons produce an inability to move. Killing poisons produce 0-5 points of damage (d6 minus 1) for each higher degree of potency. *Neutralize poison* removes both the poison and the damage it caused. If a character is hit by an accumulation of double his level in paralyzing poisons, he dies through suffocation. A killing poison produces only half damage if the saving throw is made.

As a ninja advances in experience his ability to collect natural poisons grows. At the level of *chigo* the ninja knows how to make a level-one poison of one of the six types. Every time the ninja advances a level he gains the ability to make another level of poison. The poison strength that may be made may not be larger than the number of levels selected for that poison.

At level six the ninja must be able to make three different types of poison. At level 12 the ninja must be able to make all six types of poison of at least strength one. The three poison types used at level six must be of at least strength two.

Ninja poison may be made either fluid or viscous, at the ninja's discretion. Viscous poison is used on weapons and is used as per blade venom for coverage. The poison evaporates in about 12 hours after being applied. Fluid poison is used to

poison food and drink. When the poison is used in either form, there is a 20% chance that it will be noticed.

The ability to handle neutralize-poison broths is handled in the same way as the ability to make poisons. No saving throw is needed against neutralization brews. A paralyzation cure neutralizes one level for every level of the brew. A kill neutralization cures 0-5 points of poison damage and removes one kill level of accumulation. A cure brew is most effective against the poison it is designed for. It is of half effect against the other two rates of onset poisons and alchemist poisons. Paralyzation and kill cures do not effect each other. Kill is of no effect against paralyze and vice versa.

Fighting: Ninja do not like to wear armor. They will refuse to wear plate, but some have been know in emergencies to wear chain or leather. Note that a ninja will not like chain because it is noisy. The only special armor they really use is their special shield, the neru-kuwa ito.

A ninja advances in combat steps as a fighter. A ninja has the combat adds of a fighter. They may attack open-handed as a monk. They may use judo as a samurai.

The ninja's nimbleness allows him to evade fighting damage. In a fight give the ninja a saving throw against all missile, melee, and directed spell damage. They save as a magician of one level higher vs. spells. Halflings and dwarves do not add four levels.

A directed spell is a spell such as a thin lightning bolt. It is not an area spell such as sleep or fireball. The basic idea is whether the spell is directed at the ninja or the large area of ground the ninja is on. This same saving throw is granted against area spells if the ninja is on the fringe of the affected area. If the special save is not made proceed as for normal characters. If the save is made no damage results.

Ninja know how to use all weapons. However, they have a -3 on attack rolls applied against them at all levels. This penalty is removed in two special cases and is removed weapon by weapon. The penalty applies against ninja weapons that have not yet been mastered. The two special cases are a) the ninja has mastered the appropriate ninja weapon or b) the ninja has learned a disguise class that uses the weapon. Learning a disguise class gives mastery over all normal weapons the class uses.

The -3 penalty is removed only once per weapon even if it is used by several groups.

Saving Throws: A ninja saves as a fighter. A ninja takes damage from magical books and tomes as a fighter if damage is due.

A ninja is granted a special save against missiles, melee, and directed spells as detailed above.

Disguises: Ninja are masters of disguise. Ninja are able to live for years in a disguise with no one guessing the truth. A ninja is able to change disguises with inhuman speed.

A ninja has a 4% advantage over an assassin in whether the disguise is recognized. A ninja will wear armor as part of a disguise (He will hate it and will try to get rid of the armor.)

A ninja gains the ability to form disguises as he advances in experience. The ninja will not only look like what the disguise is, but he will be able to perform the correct social mannerisms.

As the ninja gains disguise classes they are drawn from the following list:

1. Fighter: basic low level
2. Cleric: basic low level
3. Druid: basic low level
4. Thief: basic low level
5. Artisan
6. Theatrical artist
7. Merchant
8. Farmer
9. Special: must have chosen at least three disguises from among choices 1-8; this is a disguise of the character's invention. This also includes subclasses.
10. Nobility: must have chosen at least five disguises from among choices 1-9; this disguise is higher-level types.

Magic: A ninja may use any magic item that a fighter, samurai, or thief is allowed to use.

Detection of Ninja: Since most of the ninjutsu consists of trained reflexes, it is possible for these reflexes to cause the ninja to betray himself. This should be done at the discretion of the DM. If a DM should decide that this has happened, he should *never* simply say, "He is a ninja." Instead, he should say something more like, "He avoided that rock (or oxcart or whatever) very nimbly." Revealing the true nature of a ninja should be done this way to avoid players throwing rocks at every character they meet.

As the ninja advances in experience, he learns to use the tools of his trade. These are weapons (W), disguises (D), ninja tools (T), and ninja equipment (E). The numbers under these headings in the accompanying table represent the number of new draws in each category gained upon reaching a level.

Level	Title	Hit dice	Save vs. damage	W	D	T	E
0	Chigo	1d4	15	—	—	—	—
1	Bushi	1d6	15	(Basic kit)			
2	Genin	2d6	15	1	0	1	1
3	Genin	3d6	15	0	0	0	1
4	Genin	4d6	15	1	1	0	1
5	Genin	5d6	12	0	1	1	1
6	Chunin	6d6	12	1	0	1	1
7	Chunin	7d6	12	1	1	0	1
8	Chunin	7d8	12	1	0	1	1
9	Chunin	10d6	12	1	1	0	1
10	Jonin	9d8	8	1	1	1	1
11	Jonin	6d12 + 1d8	8	1	1	0	0
12	Jonin	6d12 + 2d8	8	1	1	0	0
13	Jonin	7d12 + 1d8	8	1	1	0	0
14	Jonin	8d12	8	1	1	0	0
15	Jonin	8d12 + 1d4	3	1	1	0	0
16	Jonin	8d12 + 2d4	3	0	1	0	0

Ninja families are each headed by one jonin. The same person may be jonin to more than one family.

The numbers under W, D, T, and E are the number of draws the ninja takes upon reaching that level. These skills are gained immediately upon advancing in level. A ninja may teach any ninja skill or knowledge to another ninja for a proper price. The time required per item taught should be at least one month.

Ninja are close-mouthed about ninja secrets. They have been conditioned so that they will usually die before revealing ninja secrets, even when charmed. The ninja may of course attempt to lie when questioned. Extraordinary means are required to gain information from a ninja, even when the questioner is a close friend. Ninja do not talk in their sleep.

Ninja are, as a rule, secretive. This means that they will not usually tell people that they are ninja. This means that ninja weapons, tools, and equipment are not as a rule available for

The Ninja:
Weapons by disguise class

Disguise class	Weapons reserved to disguise
Magic-user	Dagger and stave
Cleric	Mace, hammer, flail, sling, and the like
Druid	Scimitar, sickle, dagger, spear, and sling
Samurai	Katana, wakizashi, and yumi bow
Thief	Short sword, dagger, and sap
Fighter	Any weapon not listed above

Ninja thieving skills:	Ninja level	Pick lock	Find trap	Move pocket	Pick silent	Hide in shadow	Hear noise	Fall softly
Percent chance of success	0	-5	-10	0	20	30	20	15
	1	0	-5	5	40	40	50	14
	2	5	0	10	45	45	58	13
	3	10	5	15	50	50	67	12
	4	15	10	20	55	55	70	11
	5	20	15	25	60	60	73	10
	6	25	20	30	65	65	77	9
	7	35	30	35	70	70	80	8
	8	40	35	45	75	75	83	7
	9	45	40	55	80	80	88	6
	10	55	50	60	90	90	94	5
	11	65	60	65	95	95	100	4
	12	75	70	75	100	100	104	3
	13	85	80	85	105	105	108	2
	14	95	90	95	110	110	112	1
	15	100	95	100	115	115	117	0
	16	105	100	105	120	120	121	-1

Adjustments for females and non-humans

Sex/ race	Pick lock	Find trap	Pick pocket	Move silent	Hide in shadow	Hear noise
Female*	+5%	+5%	+5%	+5%	+5%	+5%
Elf	0	0	+5%	+10%	+15%	0
Dwarf	+5%	+15%	0	+5%	+5%	0
Halfling	+10%	+5%	+5%	+10%	+10%	+15%

* - Bonuses for females are cumulative for elves, dwarves and halflings, and apply "as is" for human females. Human males receive no adjustments to the basic chance for success with a thieving skill.

To use the thieving skills table, generate a number from 1-100 and add any bonuses which apply. If the resulting number is less than the number given as the percent chance of success, then the attempt has succeeded. An attempt which fails may not be repeated.

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purchase. When these items are for sale, they are considered to be curiosities, possibly valuable ones. Non-ninja will not be able to easily recognize them or use them properly in a fight (-3 on attack rolls, -2 on damage rolls). This penalty applies no matter how much time is spent in an attempt at mastery.

A ninja must therefore make his own gear or modify available items. A ninja has the skill to manufacture *any* ninja item that he has mastered.

The basic kit of a ninja consists of the following items: the ninja-to (his sword), saya (his scabbard), sageo (a belt used in wearing the saya, also used as a rope and garrote), the tetsu-bishi (caltrops), the tool osaku (a lockpick), one choice of disguise, and one choice of equipment.

Ninja skills at thievery: A ninja acts as a thief three levels below him. The chances for a ninja to successfully perform certain thieving skills are outlined on the chart above.

A ninja falls from walls as a monk. He is able to climb the sheerest of walls with his tools.

A ninja scores the multiple damage of a thief one level higher than he is.

Assassination: A ninja operates as an assassin two levels higher than his own. The probability of a ninja succeeding at an assassination is provided in the accompanying table, along with the cost of hiring a ninja for such a service.

A ninja pays 15% of his fee for an assassination to the jonin of his family. Since a chigo does not have a family he does not have to share any of his fee. A ninja earns experience points for an assassination as an assassin would.

Special Ninja Devices: A ninja gains the ability to manufacture the tools of his trade when he masters their use. Ninja devices are, as a general rule, able to be concealed. They will not usually be recognized as the professional tools they are by non-ninja. In the list of weapons below, the prices and times given in parentheses are suggested costs of manufacture for the ninja doing the manufacturing.

Ninja weapons (costs in gold)

1) Bo staff (0)

This is the basic quarterstaff. The selection of this weapon gives mastery in a fight over all staves.

2) Ninja-to (10)

This is the ninja's short sword. It is not a particularly fine sword and should be treated as an ordinary sword.

3) Sageo (.1)

This is the belt or cord used to wear the sword's scabbard. It is a long cord that can also be used as a rope or garrote.

4) Nage teppo (20 gp and one week to make 2-8 items)

These are small grenades made by filling empty eggshells. Treat these as an alchemist's flash pellets.

5) Sode tsutsu (50 gp and one week)

This is a crude, one-shot shotgun. It fires a triangular cone of projectiles up to 30 feet away and 10 feet across at the base. He uses it as an arquebus for hitting. It causes 3-24 in damage when it hits. Allow a saving throw vs. death for half damage.

6) Kakae ozutsu (50 gp and one week)

This is a crude, large-barreled, one-shot high trajectory mortar made from wood and paper. It has a minimum range of 30 feet and a maximum range of 90 feet. Treat it as a long bow for purposes of hitting. If it misses, the DM should determine where the projectile went. The projectile will burst in a 10-foot blast radius. All within the blast radius take 1-20 points of damage. Allow a saving throw vs. death for half damage.

7) Uzume-bi (20 gp and 3 days)

This is a land mine that bursts when stepped upon. It has a 5-foot blast radius. The blast causes 1-10 points of damage. Allow a saving throw as for the sode tsutsu and kakae ozutsu to see if half damage results.

8) Hankyu (30 gp and one week)

This is a special bow that shoots arrows, fire bombs, and/or other incendiaries. Treat it as a short bow for hitting. It has a maximum range of 150 feet.

9) Metsubushi (5 gp and one week to make 5 darts)

This is a blowpipe. It fires poison darts called *fukiya* silently, at a rate of one every other melee round. The darts cause 1-2 points of damage and a poison attack. The maximum range is 30 feet.

10 Tetsu-bishi (15 gp and four days to make 2)

These are caltrops. They may be poisoned. They were commonly left on the ground, in a pattern the ninja knew, over his route of retreat. These may be sold in shops.

11) Kusarigama (7 gp and one week)

This weapon looks like a scythe with a chain attached to the base of the weapon. The chain is used as a flail. The weapon may be used in four different attack modes:

Scythe: One-handed, using the scythe blade.

Flail: One-handed, as a flail.

Combination: The weapon is held two-handed and gives two attacks each melee round without penalty, one attack as a scythe and one attack as a flail.

Special: The chain may be used to entangle the enemy's weapon. This attack is made as a flail attack, but at -4 to hit.

12) Kyoketsu shoge (4 gp and one week)

This is a one-handed weapon that looks like the kusarigama with the chain replaced by a piece of rope. It may be used as a scythe. It may be thrown as a hand axe. The rope may be used to entangle the enemy's hands (it uses speed and the enemy's reflexes against him).

13) Shinobi zue (6 gp and four days)

This is a staff with a concealed flail. It is used in two attack modes, with one attack as a staff and one attack as a flail. The flail attack does not have to be used if the ninja wishes to keep the flail secret. Both attacks may be used in one melee round with no penalties.

Ninja level	Cost (gp)	Level of Victim 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9-11	12-14	15+
0	1,000	50	45	40	30	20	5	*	*	*	*	*
1	1,500	85	80	75	65	55	40	25	10	1	*	*
2	2,000	90	85	80	70	60	45	30	15	1	*	*
3	2,500	95	90	85	75	65	50	35	20	5	*	*
4	3,000	100	95	90	80	70	55	40	25	10	1	*
5	3,500	100	100	95	85	75	60	45	30	15	1	*
6	4,000	105	100	100	90	80	65	50	35	20	5	*
7	8,000	105	105	100	95	85	70	55	45	25	10	1
8	16,000	105	105	105	100	90	75	60	45	30	15	1
9	32,000	110	105	105	100	95	80	65	50	35	20	5
10	64,000	110	110	105	105	100	85	70	55	40	25	10
11	120,000	110	110	110	105	100	90	75	60	45	30	15
12	250,000	115	110	110	105	105	99	95	80	65	50	35
13	500,000	115	115	110	110	105	110	100	90	75	60	45
14	1,000,000	115	115	115	110	105	100	100	95	85	80	75
15	1,500,000	120	115	115	110	110	100	100	99	95	85	80
16	2,000,000	120	120	115	115	110	105	105	100	100	90	85

Assassination probability: *Percent chance of success*

14) Fukumi-bari (1 sp, no time)

Some ninja were able to spit poisoned needles called fukumi-bari out of their mouths at their enemies. They could even do this without injuring themselves. A ninja may spit two needles per melee round up to 15 feet. A maximum of five needles may be held in the mouth at one time. If a needle hits, there is a 50% chance that it poisoned the target; otherwise, there is no effect.

15) Shuriken (3 gp and three days for one)

The shuriken is the ninja's main throwing weapon. Normally nine of these are carried, for nine is considered to be a lucky number. Shuriken are often stuck into the ground with the blades up to deter pursuit. Placed in the ground this way, they are very hard to see.

There are three basic kinds of shuriken; each kind counts as a separate choice of ninja weapon. General properties of all shuriken are described below, followed by details on each type.

All shuriken: One may be thrown each melee round for every two levels the ninja has attained. This multiple throw may be made without penalty. Shuriken are easily concealed under robes and by clothing. Concealed shuriken may, however, be reached as easily as unconcealed shuriken and used without penalty. Shuriken have an extra penalty of -1 on attack when they face shields. All shuriken have a maximum range of 30 feet.

Dart Shuriken: These shuriken resemble long nails. They attack as a +2 dagger. When they are used against chain, the chain is considered to give protection equal to leather. The shuriken slips between the links of the chain and is slowed only by the padding underneath, which is also treated as leather. The shuriken does a basic 1-6 points of damage against a man-sized target.

Star Shuriken: These are the standard star-shaped shuriken of legend. The many blades on the shuriken give it a much greater chance to hit than a dagger. It does a basic 1-4 points of damage against man-sized targets, the same as a dagger.

Whistler Shuriken: These shuriken are a further modification of the star shuriken. They are shaped as a star shuriken, but with a hole in the center. The hole causes a loud whistling sound when the shuriken is hurled. Because of this startling noise, all within the target area save vs. fear with +2 on their die roll. Do not give the +2 if they are surprised or did not expect the noise. For combat purposes, treat whistler shuriken the same as star shuriken. The hole changes the weight of the shuriken enough to make mastery of this weapon count separately from the star shuriken. The hole may also be of use when employed as a nail puller.

Ninja tools

1) Tsuba (2 gp and one day)

This is the hilt guard of the ninja-to. The price and time listed is the modification cost and time required to modify the hilt guard on a standard short sword of 10gp cost. The tsuba was oversized so that when the ninja-to was sheathed it could be used as a first step up on something. The long sageo was then used to recover the sword.

2) Osaku (1 copper, no time)

This is a lockpick.

3) Tsuba-giri (1 silver, 4 hours)

This is a lever used to spring doors and cut locks.

4) Shikoro (5 silver, 1 week)

This is a pointed saw that cuts through wood and metal.

5) Kunai (5 silver, no time)

This is a thin, spatula-shaped knife which is used to bore or dig holes. Ninja were able to dig holes very quickly. Some were reported able to dig faster than a mole.

6) Tatami nomi (5 silver, 1 day)

This is used to chisel out locks.

7) Escape skill

This gives a ninja the ability to dislocate his joints voluntarily. This makes it very difficult to keep him bound. Allow a 20% chance each turn the ninja is not under continuous close watch that the ninja has slipped free of any bonds. This is not cumulative and is granted for each turn of effort to escape.

Ninja equipment

1) Saya (no cost, no time)

This is the scabbard of the ninja-to. It is longer than the sword, so it is often used to hide powders which might then be blown at the enemy. It is also usable as a snorkel.

2) Shinobi kai (1 silver, 1½ weeks)

This is a bamboo tube that can be used to conceal a flail.

3) Shinobi kumade (2 gp and one day)

This is a concealable and collapsible 10-foot-long climbing pole.

4) Nekade (3 gp and four days)

These are also called cat's claws. They are constructed similar to brass knuckles. The knuckles look like tiny claws and are worn on the inside of the hand. They are of some small benefit in hand-to-hand fighting. While they are worn, the ninja may neither use judo nor attack open-handed as a monk. They subtract 5% from the chance of falling while climbing.

5) Mizuzutsu (2 silver, ½ day)

This is a snorkel.

6) Musubinawa (1 gp and one week)

This is a light, 20-foot-long concealable rope that can hold up to three times body weight.

7) Neru-kawa ito (10 gp and 10 days)

This is a thick, laminated leather non-magical shield of special value to a ninja. It is a modification of the regular wooden shield. Its value to the ninja varies, depending on what the ninja does while using the shield and whether or not he has mastery of the shield. (See the "Shield usage" chart on page 21.)

8) Kama ikada (5 silver, 1 week)

This is a small, straw, foldable, and portable one-man raft that can be carried concealed under one's costume.

9) Mizugumo (2 silver and two days for 2 items)

These are also called water-feet. They are used in pairs. They are basically rafts designed to go on each foot.

10) Ukigusa (2 silver, 3 days)

This is a flotation device.

11) Tablets (10 gp and one week for 1-6)

A ninja is able to prepare condensed pellets of food and/or poison. The food and/or poison is obtained as normal and is then modified.

Effects of ninja weapons

Weapon	Man-sized	Expert	Larger than man-sized	Expert
Bo staff	1-8	1-10	1-6	1-8
Ninja-to	1-8	1-10	1-12	(1-8)+(1-6)
Sageo	1-6/rd.	1-8/rd.	1-6/rd.	1-8/rd.
Kusarigama:				
scythe	1-6	1-8	1-10	1-12
chain	1-8	1-10	1-8	1-10
special			entangle weapon	
Kyoketsu shoge:				
scythe	1-6	1-8	1-10	1-12
rope			entangle hands	
Shinobe zue:				
staff	1-6	1-8	1-6	1-8
flail	1-8	1-10	1-8	1-10
Nekade	2-5	1-6	0-3	1-4
Uzume-bi *	1-10	1-10	1-10	1-10
Tetsu-bishi	1-4	1-4	1-6	1-6
Sode tsutsu *	3-24	3-24	3-24	3-24
Kakae ozitsu *	1-20	1-20	1-20	1-20
Hankyu	1-6	1-6	1-6	1-6
Metsubushi †	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2
Kyoketsu shoge	1-6	1-8	1-4	1-6
Fukumi-bari			50% to poison	
Shuriken:				
Dart	1-6	2-7	1-4	2-5
Star	1-4	2-5	1-3	2-4
Whistler	1-4	2-5	1-3	2-4

* - An opponent which is struck with this weapon will take only half damage if a successful saving throw is made vs. death or poison (whichever is more favorable to the opponent).

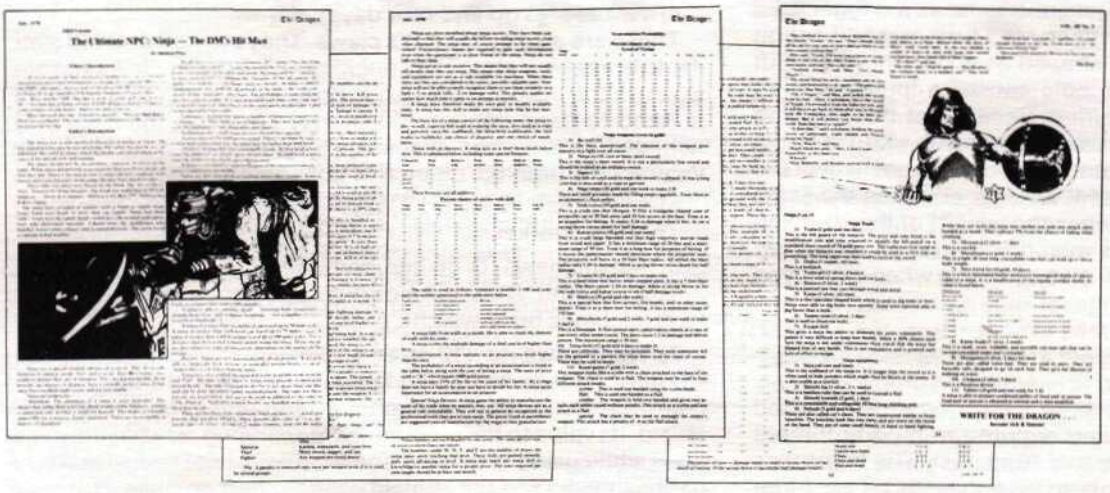
† - Plus poison (see weapon description).

Armor class adjustments

	Defender's armor class							
Weapon	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**
Bo staff	-3	-3	-2	0	0	3	1	2
Ninja-to	-2	-1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Sageo	-3	-3	-2	-2	-1	-1	0	0
Kusarigama								
scythe	-1	0	1	1	1	1	1	2
chain	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	1
special	-2	-2	-3	-2	-3	-3	-3	-3
Kyoketsu shoge								
scythe	-1	0	1	1	1	1	1	2
rope	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Shinobe zue								
staff	-3	-3	-1	0	0	2	1	1
flail	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	1
Nekade	-3	-2	-2	-1	0	1	0	1

Missile weapons (S, M, L range)

	2	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**
Sode	0	1	2	2	3	3	3	3
tsutsu	-1	0	0	1	2	2	2	2
(30 ft)	-3	-1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kakae	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
ozitsu	-3	-2	0	1	2	2	2	2
(90 ft)	-5	-4	-1	0	1	1	1	1
Hankyu	-3	-2	0	0	1	2	2	2
(150 ft)	-5	-3	-1	0	0	1	1	1
	-7	-5	-2	-1	0	0	0	0
Metsubushi	-3	-2	0	0	1	2	1	3
(30 ft)	-5	-3	-1	-1	0	1	1	2
	-7	-5	-4	-3	0	0	0	0
Kyoketsu	-4	-3	-2	-2	-1	-1	0	0
shoge	-5	-4	-3	-3	-2	-2	-1	-1
(45 ft)	-6	-5	-4	-4	-3	-3	-2	-2
Fukumi-bari	-1	0	2	3	2	3	3	5
(15 ft)	-2	-1	1	2	1	2	2	4
	-3	-2	0	1	0	1	1	3
Dart	-1	-1	1	1	2	2	3	4
shuriken	-2	-2	0	0	1	1	2	3
(30 ft)	-3	-3	-1	-1	0	0	1	2



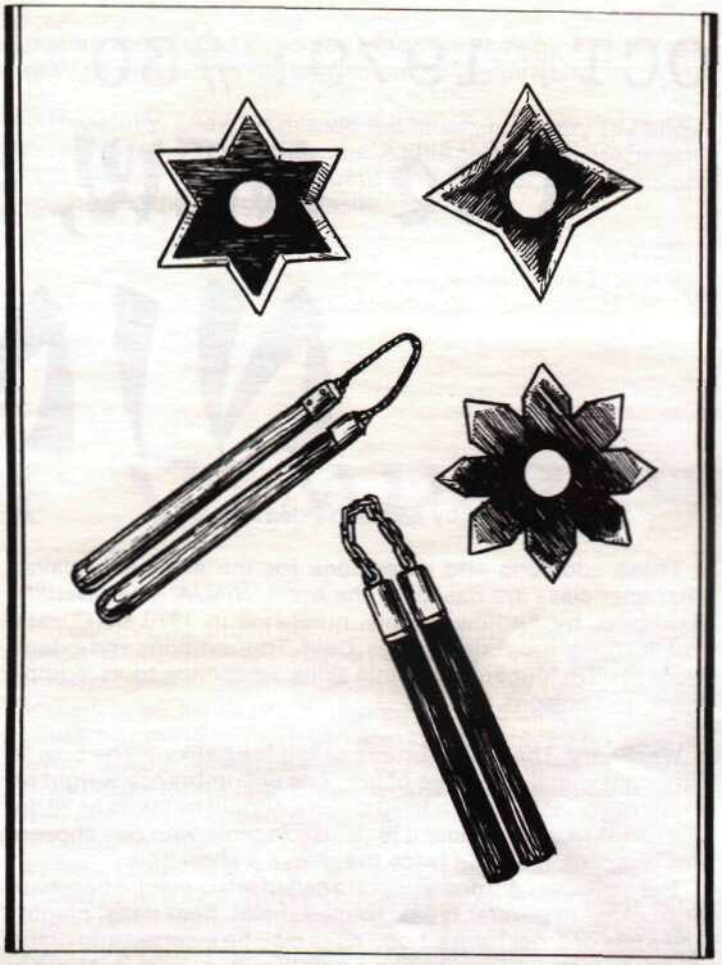
The Ninja:
Original layout, July 1978; issue #16

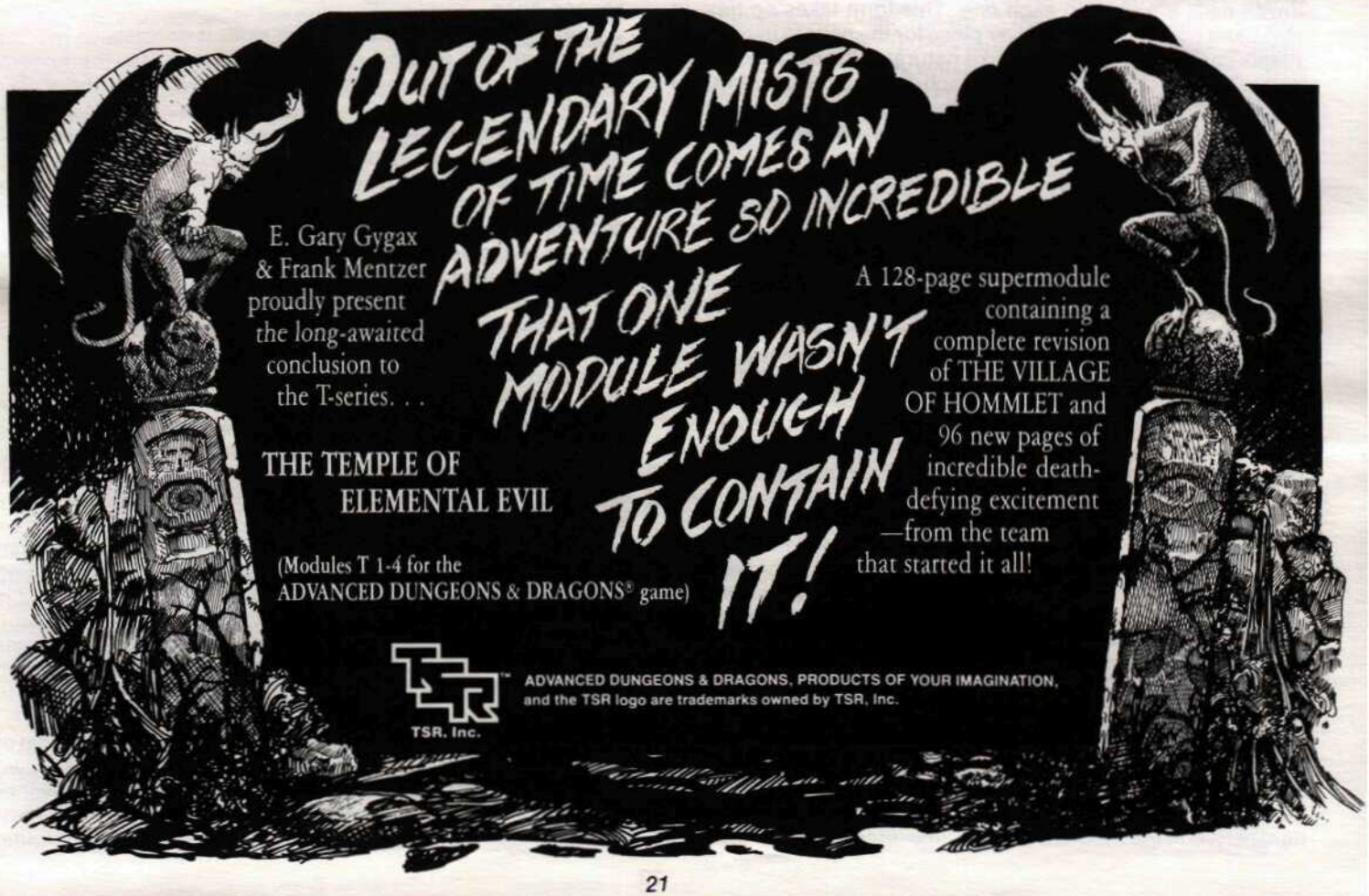
	Defender's armor class							
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Star, Whistler	-2	-1	3	3	5	5	6	6
shuriken	-3	-2	2	2	4	4	5	5
(30 ft)	-4	-3	1	1	3	3	4	4

Note: The shuriken have additional special modifications against certain types of armor:

Armor type	Dart shuriken	Star and Whistler shuriken
Shield only	2/1/0	5/4/3
Leather and shield	1/0/-1	4/3/2
Chain	4/3/2	3/2/1
Chain and shield	3/2/1	2/1/0
Plate and shield	-2/-3/-4	-3/-4/-5

Shield action	Shield usage User action	User type
Perfect missile protection	does not move or melee	master of shield
+3 shield, add to saves	user moves	master of shield
+2 shield as above	user fights	master of shield
+3 shield	does not move	non-master of shield
+2 shield	user moves	non-master of shield
+1 shield	user fights	non-master of shield
+1 shield	all other cases	

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OCT. 1979: #30

The NEW, IMPROVED NINJA

by Sheldon Price

These additions and extensions for the ninja non-player character class are based on the book, *NINJA: The Invisible Assassins*, by Andrew Adams, published in 1970 by O'Hara Publications, Inc., Los Angeles, Calif. The additions and extensions involve four areas of ninja skills: weaponry, tools, equipment, and poisons.

Weaponry: The ninja's bow is called the hankyu. The bow is very light with a rapid rate of fire. The encumbrance weight of the hankyu, including up to 40 arrows, should be taken as 20. In the hands of a ninja skilled in its use (a ninja who has chosen this weapon), it fires at twice the rate of a short bow.

The ninja use caltrops which are called tetsu-bishi. The tetsu-bishi came in several types: formed metal, bent nails, plants, and a mix of other forms. Long nails may be inserted into plant matter to form what looks like a potato with nails in it. About a dozen nails are used in each one. This form takes no time to make and costs about one silver piece for the nails to use in one. Plants can be found that look like natural caltrops. These have no cost. There is a 5% chance for each day spent searching that 1-6 of these may be found. The probability is not cumulative. These cause damage the same as regular tetsu-bishi formed entirely of metal.

Metal claws may be attached to fingers and toes. These sharp claws may cause serious injury on penetrating the skin. They may be poisoned. They cost 2 silver pieces and it takes one week to make a complete set for hands and toes.

Female ninja, called *kunoichi*, often strike with long metal hairpins which are concealed in an elaborate hairdo. These pins are usually used by stealth when the kunoichi is very close to her target. They are often used while the kunoichi is in bed next to her target while her target sleeps. They have a nil cost.

A special type of spear called the bisento is often used. The bisento is not a pure ninja invention; other warriors do use it. It is most like a spear with a scimitar attached to the tip. Unlike a normal spear, it may both thrust and cut. The cost of the bisento is 12gp.

The ninja also used variations of staff weapons. The shikomi-zue is basically a "sword staff," a staff with a concealed sword blade that may be quickly extended. The cost of the shikomi-zue is 5 silver pieces plus 1 week to assemble it after the staff and a short sword are acquired. Staves also had small missiles attached to one end. These missiles may be pellets or darts. They could be sent at an enemy by flicking the staff.

Ninja also use a device called a poison water gun. The main use of this weapon is to blind enemies. It consists of a hollow bamboo tube about 1½ feet long. The tube is open at one end and has a tiny hole at the other end. A small piece of cloth may be used to close it. A wooden plunger small enough to fit into the open end is used. A cloth is wrapped around it to make a tight fit. When the weapon is used, the plunger is forced into the tube, causing a spray of water to shoot out of the hole. The weapon has a maximum effective range of 60 feet. The spray is in the shape of a triangle 60 feet high and 10 feet across at the base. The ammunition used is powdered iron and dye suspended in water. A skin-contact poison may be used, but then the weapon user is in extreme danger. The main effect of the weapon is to blind enemies' eyes. Allow a saving throw vs. poison to see if this happens. It takes 1-12 melee rounds to clear the eyes. The cost of this weapon is 5 silver pieces and 4 days.

A cannon may also be used. The cannon is a wooden tube, about 8 inches in outside diameter, 6 inches inside diameter, and 30 inches long. It fires a spherical metal projectile about 60 feet in a low, flat trajectory. It may hit more than one target when fired. The ninja could fire it while holding it in his hands standing up. The tube may be used no more than three times. It takes 2 gold pieces and one week to make the tube. It takes 10 gold pieces and one week to make each projectile. It takes 20 gold pieces and one week to make the explosive to fire the cannon once.

The art of kuji-kiri is a strange skill. It consists of making strange, almost magical, passes and signs with the fingers. These signs are not magical. They act to restore the ninja's morale and self-confidence, make better decisions, and to entrance one's enemies. The entrancing affects non-ninja only. A non-ninja who looks at these signs being made becomes semi-entranced for a short period of time with no lingering memory of having been semi-entranced. In simple terms, the non-ninja becomes insensitive to the ninja's presence. A saving throw vs. the sign is allowed for a non-ninja. If the save is made, there is no effect. A ninja must concentrate while making the sign.

To be allowed a save, the victim must be aware that a sign is being made and he must attempt to look away. No save is allowed on the first exposure to these signs. When an attempt to break the entrancement is made, a number from 3-18 is generated (3d6). The save is successful if a number less than the average of the victim's intelligence and wisdom (round down) is generated. For each time the victim has been exposed to kuji-kiri in the past, subtract 2 from the number generated. Note that the ninja does not have to be looking at a victim in order for the effects of kuji-kiri to be felt.

Tools: There is an improved version of the nekade, often called cat's claws. This version is made of metal. It causes +1 on damage in a fight. It also requires +1 on being hit if a shield is not being used. This is because this metal version, the *tekagi*, can stop a sword blow without taking injury. The tekagi costs triple the cost of the nekade. It may not be chosen as a weapon until after the nekade is chosen. It has the same benefit in climbing as the nekade.

The sandals of the ninja were specially designed. The sole of the sandal could be removed and changed. There were two types of soles used. One gave good traction, and the other allowed a more silent step. Each type of sole costs one piece of gold and one week to make a pair. The upper part of the sandal

has the same cost, but the soles and the uppers may be manufactured during the same period of time. A complete pair of sandals with two sets of soles will cost 3 gold pieces and consume two weeks of time. Both types of sandal soles are included in the same draw for the acquisition of a new tool at a certain level.

The ninja wear armor at times. They know how to pad chainmail so that the mail is silent without adding extra encumbrance problems. The mail was normally worn under outer robes. The drawing of this as a new tool gives the knowledge of how to pad mail to be silent without adding extra encumbrance.

The ninja also studies the triparte art of sacchi-jitsu. Each part of this art constitutes one draw. The mastery of all three parts enables the ninja to sense who or what will be the victor in any contest.

Satten-jitsu, the first part, is the art of being "air aware." It gives the ability to sense what the weather will be like in the short term, not more than a few days. It also gives a feeling of what weather is suitable for different activities.

Sacchi-jitsu, the term for the second part as well as the term used for all three parts together, is the art of being "earth aware." This skill gives the ninja sensitivity to the terrain he is in. He is aware of which places are good for ambushes. He is aware of how to use the terrain to good advantage.

Santsun-jitsu, the third part, is the art of being "man aware." This skill gives awareness of human weak points. It tells how to judge character and intentions. It will work on any creature with a humanoid upper body. It tells how to best manipulate and appeal to people.

Equipment: The ninja has a wide variety of illumination equipment that he may make. The *mizu-taimatsu* is a torch that will burn in the rain. The *tanagokoro* is a small torch that can be held in the palm. It is so small that the flame/light may be concealed by one hand. It is used for unobtrusive, short-range work. The *ninsokudai* is an L-shaped candle which may be hooked to walls and trees. The costs of these items are the same as for ordinary torches and candles.

The *ukidaru* is a device used to walk across water. It consists of two large pots which are placed over the feet and serve much like small boats. It costs 1 gold piece and three days to make one.

As the kama ikada may be bulky to use, the *kyobako-fune* is often used. It resembles a fur-covered wooden chest which is light and easy to transport. It costs the same as an ordinary chest. The fur acts as waterproofing.

The *mizukaki* are flippers worn while swimming. It costs 2 days and one gold piece to make a pair.

The ninja could also modify his sandals so that he could walk on ice. The change consists of putting blades under the sandals. It costs one piece of gold and one week to make a pair of blades.

The ninja are expert high jumpers. They are often able to jump at least their body height. This ability is in addition to the ninja basic kit.

The *doka* is a small heating device which ninja use. It is a metal shell containing burning coals. It can be used to set off explosives. It costs 1 gold piece and 2 weeks to make one.

Smoke bombs are often used. They are not weapons. The bomb gives off smoke for 1-6 turns. The smoke tends to form a sphere with its radius expanding by 5 feet every turn. If will then dissipate normally when the bomb burns out. Each bomb requires 4 days and 5 gold pieces to make.

"Rocket arrows" can be employed. They are very inaccurate, used at -6 to hit with respect to the short bow. If the arrow misses, it will land 4-48 feet away from where it was aimed. The rocket-powered arrow may be explosive. It is usually used as a signaling device. Fired from a bow, it has a range of 150 feet. It

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costs 2 weeks and 10 gold pieces to make one arrow.

Poisons: There are six more types of poisons that may be made. Each draw of one of these counts as a regular poison draw.

1) At any level, the ninja may choose *Gyokuro* as a poison draw. This is a poison that causes slow death. It is administered in a liquid form. If the victim is ill, it causes death in a few days. If the victim is healthy, it causes a slow wasting resulting in death after not more than 70 days. This poison is handled as an ordinary ninja poison. It accumulates levels but does not cause physical injuries.

2) Ninja also used dung and blood as a poison. This mix causes almost instant infection, leading to lockjaw and death. Ninja also used itching powder. Neither the dung-and-blood mixture nor the itching powder can accumulate in levels. Both are acquired on the same poison draw.

3) Upon reaching level 4, the ninja may make a laugh-inducing poison. The poison has almost instant effect, is administered in food and does not have levels to accumulate.

4 and 5) Upon reaching level 6, the ninja can make a sleep-inducing poison. These poisons have levels and accumulate as a paralyzing poison at half strength. The poison causes sleep for 1-12 turns. This poison comes in two forms, each of which is a separate draw: 4) The same physical form as standard ninja poison, and 5) A form which takes effect when burned.

6) Upon reaching level 8, the ninja can make a delayed poison that can cause temporary insanity. The poison is administered in food. The poison takes effect a few hours after being administered. It does not have levels and does not accumulate in the victim.

All of the above poisons have no effect if the save is made.

Healing skills: The ninja must be able to treat and heal himself, because he is not always able to risk seeing a doctor. Normal sprains and bruises can always be treated by a ninja. The ninja is able, as his cure-poison draw at any level, to draw a healing skill. There are two types of healing skills:

(1) He is able to learn how to treat any one disease for the draw. The treatment will cost 10 pieces in gold for each instance of the disease healed. The healing may be done once a day.

(2) He gains the ability to heal 2 points of injury a day. This does not include injury caused by poisons. This ability is not the same as a *heal* spell. For every 5 points of injury healed by this method, there is a penalty of 1 on attack and defense until such time as the damage would have healed normally. Also, this method will not help a character who has taken less than 50% of his total hit points in damage.

Healing skills may be drawn as the cure-poison draw at any level. These skills do not, however, count toward the distribution requirements on poison types.

	Armor class adjustment								Damage vs. opponent			
									Size S, M		Size L	
Weapon	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**Non-expert**	**Expert**	**Non-expert**	**Expert**
Metal claws	-6	-4	-5	-3	-2	0	-2	0	2-5	2-5	2-5	2-5
Hairpins	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	1-6	1-8	1-6	1-8
Bisento	-1	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	(varies with mode of use)			
						throw or thrust			1-8	2-12	1-10	2-16
						thrust vs. charge			1-10	2-16	1-12	2-16
						set vs. charge			1-12	2-12	2-16	2-20
Shikomi-zue:												
stave	-3	-3	-1	0	0	2	1	1	1-6	1-8	1-6	1-8
sword	-1	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	1-8	1-10	1-12	2-14
Stave dart:												
S range	-3	-2	0	0	1	2	1	3				
M range	-5	-3	-1	-1	0	1	1	2	1-4	0-2	2-5	1-4
L range	-7	-5	-4	-3	0	0	0	0				
Cannon:												
S range	1	1	0	0	-1	-1	-2	-2				
M range	0	0	-1	-1	-2	-2	-3	-3	1-10	1-12	1-10	1-12
L range	-1	-1	-2	-2	-3	-3	-4	-4				
Poison water gun:												
S range	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3				
M range	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	special			
L range	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1				

The new, improved Ninja: *Original layout from issue #30; October 1979*

II. The Sorceror's Scroll

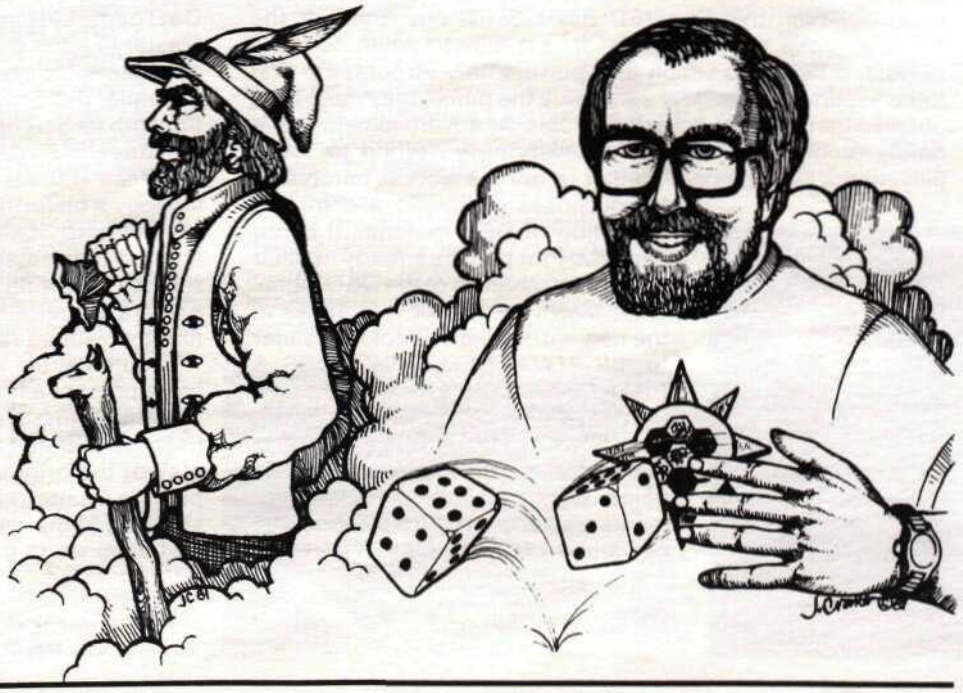
Although we've never tallied up all the figures, it's safe to assume that E. Gary Gygax's writing has filled more pages in DRAGON™ magazine than the words of any other writer.

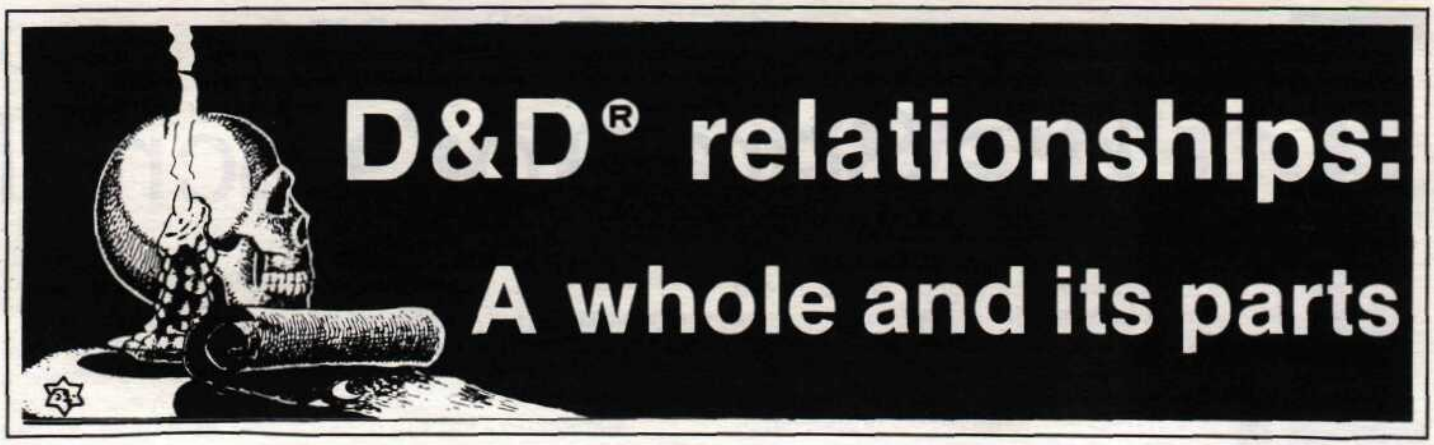
And rightfully so. Gary Gygax is, for the benefit of those who may have been locked in a dungeon the last few years, the co-author of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game and the creator of the ADVANCED D&D® game system. If not for his ideas and the games that sprang from them, there wouldn't be a DRAGON magazine, let alone a "Best Of."

Over the years, Gary has enlightened D&D® and AD&D™ enthusiasts in his column, "From the Sorceror's Scroll." He has used that space, at various times, to further explain rules, to express the philosophy that underlies both games, and to clarify the difference between the D&D and AD&D systems.

For the thousands of players and DMs who have taken up D&D or AD&D adventuring in the last couple of years or so, Gary's opinions and recommendations will clear up misconceptions or uncertainties they may have encountered. For those who have already read and benefitted from these essays, they're worth another look. You can never get too much of a good thing.

Opinions and options from the man who made the games





D&D® relationships: A whole and its parts

MAY 1978 #14

Not a few D&D® enthusiasts are puzzled about what is going on with the game. They are wondering what the new "Basic Set" of D&D is, will the original game be around much longer, and what ADVANCED D&D® is. As briefly as possible, I will attempt to answer all such questions, for we have no desire to confuse DMs and players as to what is taking place.

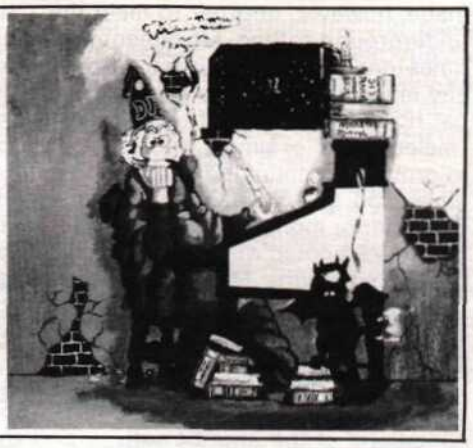
Before the third D&D supplement (*Eldritch Wizardry*) was in print, it had been decided that some major steps would have to be taken to unify and clarify the D&D game system. This project began then, but such a long and complex task cannot be accomplished quickly if it is to be done right, and if nothing else we were determined to do it right! Organizational work was in progress when correspondence with J. Eric Holmes, professor, author and incidentally a respected neurologist, disclosed that the Good Doctor was interested in undertaking the first stage of the project — the rewriting and editing necessary to extract a beginner's D&D set from the original volumes and their supplements. The result of his labors is the D&D Basic Set. It does not differ greatly from the Original set, except that it is far better structured — thus far more understandable for an individual previously not acquainted with the concept of fantasy role-playing. The rules clarify things and are changed in a few minor areas which do not materially affect existing campaigns. There are a few new first- and second-level spells. It is important to note, however, that the D&D Basic Set is not aimed at the existing group of enthusiasts: It is designed solely for new players. It has rules which take players only through the first three experience levels! If they enjoy the game, they must then obtain either the AD&D™ or D&D rules. As advertisements have boldly proclaimed, the set has everything needed to *begin* playing the D&D game. Whether or not the work is purchased for purposes of having a complete collection of D&D material, it is not necessary for players already familiar with the mechanics of the D&D game. Well, then what about references in the new work which direct the reader to the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game?

The D&D Basic Set was done with care, and it can lead to either the original game or to the newer AD&D game. Because of the many supplements and articles which had become needed to render the D&D game more easily understandable and multifaceted, we decided that a whole new game was in order. There were too many gray areas in the original rules, too many different books, too many varying approaches offered. However, the original work will never be done away with, for it offers a system which still attracts many persons. Whether from a nostalgic standpoint, from a desire to collect anything pertaining to the D&D system, or because of the content which will be excluded from the concept of the new game, we at TSR are certain that the D&D Collectors Edition will always be in demand. The only part of the original system which will be revised to fit into the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game is Supplement IV, *Gods, Demi-gods & Heroes*. (*Editor's note: This volume's counterpart in the AD&D system is the DEITIES & DEMIGODS™ Cyclopedia.*) Here is what the new game will consist of:

The AD&D Monster Manual was anticipated to be ready prior to Christmas. As usual, there were delays, mainly from the printer and the binder. (*Editor's note: The Monster Manual was released about the same time this was originally printed.*) I am drafting the final manuscript for the player's book, and a rough outline of the referee's volume is on hand, so work on that can commence as soon as the former is completed. Furthermore, Messrs. Kuntz and Ward are hard at work revising the *Gods, Demigods & Heroes* supplement so that it will be ready to go into print soon. Thus, the AD&D game will consist of four books — three main parts and a supplement. The Monster Manual and the *Gods, Demi-Gods & Heroes* revision will fit into the original D&D game system with a bit of care on the part of the Dungeon Master, if such is desired. But all in all, the AD&D system is a new game. To state this in terms of existing boardgames, for example, the D&D and AD&D games will bear the same relationship as *Stalingrad* does to *Russian Campaign*. The former is a truly classic game, but the latter is even better. Nonetheless, devotees will wish to have both! Furthermore, to carry the analogy a bit further, parts of *Russian Campaign* can be incorporated into *Stalingrad* to give the latter new horizons in respect to the strategies and tactics of play. While each game will retain a following which adhere only to one or the other, most players will certainly wish to have both regardless of which they find themselves playing more frequently.

In summation, the D&D Basic Set is aimed at new players, those persons as yet uninitiated to the wonders of fantasy. While it channels these new adventurers toward the AD&D game, with its better ordered and more clear rules, it suits such players for play of the original game just as well. The AD&D books will provide a better, cleaner system aimed at improving the understanding of the role-playing game system. I am certain you will find them worth the wait!

Ground and spell area scales



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The differences between the outdoor measure of distance (1" = 10 yards) and the indoor scale (1" = 10 feet) in the D&D® rules causes considerable misunderstanding and confusion amongst DMs and players alike. This ambiguity is worth discussion here, for the benefit of readers as well as to examine the root cause of the problem. Here is the tale of how it all came about:

Under cover date of 1 July 1970, I published the last issue of the Castle & Crusades Society (an affiliate of the International Federation of Wargaming) newsletter, *Domesday Book* (#5). Therein was printed the "Lake Geneva Tactical Studies Association Medieval Miniatures Rules — the progenitor of *Chainmail*. These rules had a ground scale of 1" = 10 yards. About this same time, I began having the LGTSA play a rough set of fantasy rules which were eventually included as *Chainmail*'s Fantasy Supplement. The medieval rules contained a brief mention that mines were possible only when a campaign (long-term, map and paper game with table top battle resolution) was being conducted. However, when *Chainmail* appeared in 1971, its section on sieges contained a paragraph telling readers to conduct tunneling and counter-digging operations on paper, with a neutral third party acting as judge. When Dave Arneson took this concept into the "dungeons" of his Castle & Crusade Society medieval campaign castle, *Blackmoor*, he used a one-third smaller ground scale (1" = 10 feet). This change was quite logical, and it was retained when the original D&D rules were composed.

Ground scale and figure scale seldom agree due to the area of available playing surface. At a scale of 25mm (1 inch) to 6 feet, a stout English longbow would have a range of about 105 inches, or nearly 11 feet! Note that is actual distance on the playing surface. Heavy crossbows and siege machinery (catapults) are worse still. Upping the scale to 1" = 10 feet doesn't help all that much, for we still have an effective longbow range of over five actual feet. Now, all miniatures rules also deal with a time scale, and this must be such as to allow for maneuver, movement, and combat over the playing surface. While a high movement rate is possible if the time scale is relatively long, this disallows any formation changing or maneuvering.

There are, therefore, three scales to deal with: figure scale, ground scale, and time scale.

A ground scale consideration is most important, for playing area is the most limiting factor. A scale of 1" = 10 yards gives a sufficiently large scale area for conducting typical medieval battles if a 5-foot-by-10-foot tabletop or floor area is available.

A time scale of 1 game turn equalling 1 scale minute allows for historic movement, fire, and combat.

Figure scaling is the least important. The size of the casting dictates what scale is used: if 54mm, 40mm, or 30mm size figures are used, the *actual* surface that a figure occupies dictates that a 1:20 scale ratio be used, i.e. about a one-inch square of tabletop is taken up by the casting of a footsoldier, and this is 10 x 10 scale yards. A 25mm figure falls just a bit short, and if a 1:20 scale is to be used, figures should be base mounted at 1" per foot figure, 1½" × 3" for horse. 15mm figures are perfect for a scale of 1:10.

As there are considerable distortions in existence on the table top (consider a 25mm figure being 30' tall if measured by ground scale), some very strange things happen when the ignorant or deceitful player attempts to use the *D&D* outdoor scale for magic range and area of effect without considering ground and figure scale. Len Lakofka was kind enough to point out to me what happens if the yards of effect of a spell are converted to feet in a game where a 1:1 ratio is used, *viz.* 1" equals 6 scale feet. A huge area can be covered with *webs* from a lowly magic-user's second level spell. Of course this is ridiculous, as the 1" = 10 yards scale only applies in cases where all other scales are in proportion. Imagine the movement rate of figures — a heavily armored man-at-arms would travel 30" per round, light cavalry 120"! If one scale is tampered with, all of the others must be adjusted accordingly in order to retain a reasonable, balanced, and playable game. Let us go back to the origination of the D&D system again and discuss the concepts used therein in relation to *CHAINMAIL*.

CHAINMAIL, being a set of medieval miniatures rules, was carefully grounded on historical evidence. It attempted to provide the groundwork for simulations of historical battles using miniature figurines. The "Fantasy Supplement" was an outgrowth of the medieval rules and the "Man-to-Man Combat" (1 figure to 1 actual combatant) section I also devised for conducting battles of several different campaigns I ran for the LGTSA. All of the fantastic people and monsters were discussed in terms of *Chainmail*. Spell ranges and areas of effect were scaled to *Chainmail*. Saving throws were devised to match the combat abilities of creatures, which were in turn meshed with the troop types in *Chainmail*.

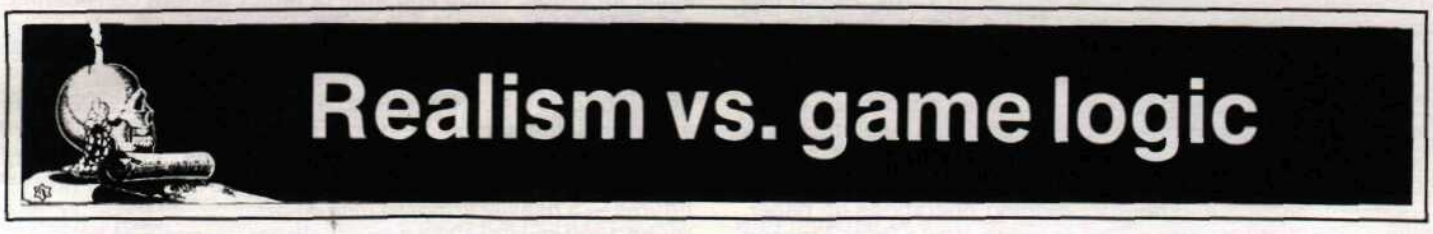
Since the D&D game grew out of Chainmail, it was based on the same scale assumptions. Changes had to be

made, however, in order to meet the 1:1 figure ratio and the underground setting. Movement was adjusted to a period ten times longer than a *Chainmail* turn of 1 minute, since exploring and mapping in an underground dungeon is slow work. Combat, however, stayed at the *Chainmail* norm and was renamed a "melee round" or simply "round." As the object of the game was to provide a continuing campaign where players created and developed game personae, the chance for death (of either character or monster) was reduced from that in *Chainmail*, so that players could withdraw their characters from unfavorable combat situations. Missile ranges were reduced by one-third (from scale yards to scale feet) because of the confined area of play and the conditions prevailing, *viz.* low ceilings, darkness, narrow passages, etc.

The range and area of effect of each magic spell was adjusted accordingly, for the 1:1 ratio had to be considered, as did the conditions of the area of activity and the ranges of normal missile weapons. (Remember that the D&D game was developed as a *game*, and allowances for balance between character roles and character-vs.-monster confrontations were made.)

For about two years, D&D adventures were played by the majority of enthusiasts without benefit of any visual aids. They held literally that it was a paper-and-pencil game, and if some particular situation arose which demanded more than verbalization, they would draw or place dice as tokens in order to picture the conditions. In 1976 a movement began among D&D players to portray characters with actual miniature figurines. Manufacturers of miniature figures began to provide more and more models aimed at the D&D market — characters, monsters, weapons. dungeon furnishings, etc. Availability sparked interest, and the obvious benefits of using figures became apparent: Distances could be pinned down, opponents were obvious, and a certain extra excitement was generated by the use of painted castings of what players "saw." Because of the return of miniatures to the D&D game, it is tending to come full circle; back to table-top battles not unlike those which were first fought with the parent of the D&D system, *Chainmail*'s Fantasy Supplement, now occurring quite regularly. Unfortunately,the majority of D&D enthusiasts did not grow up playing military miniatures, so even the most obvious precepts of table-top play are arcane to them. Distorting the area of effect of a spell seems to be an excellent idea to players with magic-user characters, and many referees do not know how to handle these individuals when they wave the rule book under their nose and prate that scale outdoors is 1 inch equals 10 yards.

More unfortunately, the blame for the possible ignorance of player and Dungeon Master alike rests squarely on my shoulders. It would have been a small matter to explain to everyone that the outdoor scale must be used for range only, never for area of effect, unless a figure ratio of 1:20, or 1:10, is used, and constructions (siege equipment, buildings, castles, etc.) are scaled to figures rather than to ground scale! If ground scale is changed, movement distances must be adjusted. If time scales are changed, both movement and missile fire/spell casting must be altered. Furthermore, if 30mm or 25mm figures and scale buildings and terrain are not used, then the area of effect must be adjusted proportionately. I ask your collective pardon for this neglect, and I trust that the foregoing will now make the matter clear. There are distortions of scales in the D&D rules, and in the AD&D rules as well. Despite distortions, each meshes with the other to make the game an enjoyable one.



Realism vs. game logic

JULY 1978 #16

In spite of the continued success of the D&D® game, despite the ever-growing demand for it, I am somewhat amazed and very pleased that so many people share a love for the fantastic and heroic with me. It is indeed an unusual honor to have been able to bring so many people so much enjoyment. It tends to make one work harder at other projects so as to make certain the best possible effort is presented. Whatever is done will invariably be compared to the D&D game, and none of us at TSR have any desire to produce a game that falls short of public expectations.

The position of originating the concept of a paper-and-pencil fantasy role-playing game and introducing it to the gaming hobby stands greatly to the credit of TSR. In my mind, it puts us beside the creators of chess (whoever they were), miniature wargames (H.G. Wells), and board wargames (thank you, Avalon Hill!). TSR designed and promoted the whole; it pioneered a concept which is today the most popular form of our hobby. Little did I or the other members of the Lake Geneva Tactical Studies Association realize, as we fought out fantasy miniatures battles on my sand table, that the publication of the rules we used, the Fantasy Supplement to *Chainmail* (copyright 1971), would pioneer a whole new form of game. There are currently some 100,000 D&D players, and at the current rate of growth that number could easily double next year. This large audience is highly devoted. Well-wishers are many, and there but few who complain that the D&D game is not everything they had hoped for.

However, among those who play the game avidly there are a vocal few who continually state their opinions as to how and where the game is lacking — and, of course, how *they* have the perfect solution. I do not take issue with any general statement that the D&D system is not flawless; obviously, human imperfection precludes any claim to perfection. I do admit to becoming a trifle irritated at times to read an article in some obscure fan magazine or a letter to the editor of some small publication which attacks the game — or claims to be sure to improve it if only their new and "improved" rules are followed. My irritation is, I hope, only impatience with those who only dimly perceive the actual concepts of the game, and not wounded vanity.

Consider what a game is:

Gaming is a form of play. Games are usually for diversion or amusement, although sometimes they are played for a stake (gambling) or prizes. They are typically contests. *Fun* is a synonym for game. To my mind, a game which provides ample fun and enjoyment is good, and if it brings endless hours of amusement and diversion it is proportionately better. This view is held in common with most D&D enthusiasts, but there are those vociferous few who seem to find their principal enjoyment in attacking rather than playing the game. The uniform element amongst these individuals is a complete failure to grasp the simple fact that the D&D game is a *game*. Its rules are designed and published so as to assure a balanced and cohe-

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sive whole. Each segment has been considered and developed so as to fit with the other parts. Each part, meshing with the others, provides an amusing diversion, a game which is fun to play and set so as to provide maximum enjoyment for as long a period of time as possible. Each separate part must be viewed as something which contributes to the whole. Pulling this or that section from the body and criticizing it is invalid unless the workings of that particular segment do not harmonize with the whole, thus causing the entire game to be unenjoyable. That the vast majority of players agree with this view is evident. There are very few who attempt to insert dissimilar rules into a system which was carefully designed to work on precepts totally at odds with what the would-be designer views as crucial to making the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game a good one.

The D&D game encourages inventiveness and originality within the framework of its rules. Those who insist on altering the framework should design their own game. Who can say that such an effort might not produce a superior product? Certainly not I.

Interestingly, most of the variant systems which purport to improve the game are presented under the banner of "realism." I have personally come to suspect that this banner is the refuge of scoundrels; whether the last or first refuge is immaterial. "Realism" has become a bugaboo in the hobby, and all too many of the publishers — TSR included — make offerings to this god too frequently. The very definition of a game gives the lie to this false deity. *Real* implies being true to life, not artificial, and related to actuality. A game is a real thing, but its subject matter can, at most, give only a "sense" of what actually took place or exists. Paper maps, cardboard counters, plastic markers, or toy tanks and soldiers are not and never will be the stuff of historical reality. There, real bullets kill and maim actual people. Men, women, and children suffer and die, millions of dollars are spent and destroyed, all for the glory of war. Therefore, those who desire realism in wargames, or simulations of social or political events, or racing, or anything else used as subject material for a game should go and do the actual thing —join the military, enter politics, become a race-car driver, and so on. At best a game can give a reflection of reality, and then only if its rules reflect historical actualities and logically proceed from truth and facts.

When fantasy games are criticized for being "unrealistic" —and by fantasy I mean both imaginary science-fiction games and heroic fantasy — the magnitude of the misconception astounds me! How can the critic presume that his or her imagined projection of a non-existent world or future history is any more "real" than another's? While science fiction does have some facts and good theories to logically proceed from, so that a semblance of truth can be claimed for those works which attempt to ground themselves on the basis of reality for their future projections, the world of "never-was" has no such shelter. Therefore, the absurdity of a cry for "realism" in a pure fantasy game seems so evident that I am overwhelmed when such confronts me. Yet, there are those persistent few who keep demanding it. The "camel" of working magic, countless pantheons of gods and devils, monsters that turn people to stone or breathe fire, and characters that are daily faced with herculean challenges which they overcome by dint of swordplay and spell-casting is gulped down without a qualm. It is the "gnat" of "unrealistic" combat, or "unrealistic" magic systems, or the particular abilities of a class of characters, which makes them gag. This becomes hard to cope with, because I am basically a realist.

In a pure fantasy game —one based on myth, mythos, and its own unique make-believe — realism (as a reflection of the actual) and logic can not be defined in terms conventional to other game forms. Realism in such a game can only be judged by the participants' acceptance of the fantasy milieu invoked by the game. If this make-believe world is widely and readily accepted, if players fully agree to suspend their disbelief when playing it, the game has reality for them. Involvement and enjoyment indicate acceptance of a *game reality*, and the game becomes realistic thereby. *Game logic* in such a fantasy can only follow the basic tenets of the game, logical or illogical. If the basic precepts of the fantasy follow the *imprimus*, it has its own logic. Just as the fantasy must be accepted to achieve the game reality, so must the underlying principle of the game system be understood to follow its logic.

The D&D rule system is a make-believe game. It is designed, however, to facilitate close personal involvement in all aspects of play; this makes suspension of disbelief easier for those who can initially accept a game form which does not relate to any reality except a few tenuous areas; *viz.* actual kinds of weapons from the medieval period are generally named, as are actual types of armor, and the social order of medieval Europe (and occasionally the Middle East and elsewhere in the world) is mentioned as a basis for the game, to state the most obvious factual sources. It is a game for the imaginative and fanciful, and perhaps for those who dream of adventure and derring-do in a world all too mundane. As a game must first and foremost be fun, it needs no claim to "realism" to justify its existence.

The D&D system exists as a game because thousands of people enjoy playing it. Since the game was specifically designed to be fun and enjoyable, and the consensus of opinion is that it is so, does it need to have logical justification of any or all of its rules? Because logic does not necessarily create an enjoyable game form, the reply to this must be generally negative. Logic, even game logic, must be transcended in the interest of the overall game. If an illogical or inconsistent part fits with the others to form a superior whole, then its very illogicalness and inconsistency are logical and consistent within the framework of the game. The rules exist for the play of the game, although all too often it seems that the game is designed for the use of the rules in many of today's products. When questioned about the whys and wherefores of the game, I sometimes rationalize the matter and give "realistic" and "logical" reasons. The truth of the matter is that the D&D rules were written principally as a *game* — perhaps game realism and game logic were consciously considered when this was done, but that is begging the question. Enjoyment is the real reason for the D&D game having been created, written, and published.

With the game's popularity increasing so dramatically, I fervently desire to put the matter of variants, particularly "realistic" variants, to rest once and for all, so as to get on to other more important things, but it keeps springing up every time a sound stroke is dealt to it. Additions to and augmentations of certain parts of the D&D rules are fine. Variants which change the rules so as to imbalance the game or change it are most certainly not. This sort of tinkering falls into the realm of crea-

tion of a new game, not development of the existing system — and, as I stated earlier, those who wish to make those kinds of changes should go and design their own game. In order to make this clear, a few examples of destructive variants are given below.

Why can't magic-users employ swords? And for that matter, why not allow fighters to use wands and similar magical devices? On the surface this seems a small concession, but in actuality it would spoil the game! Each character role has been designed with care in order to provide varied and unique approaches to solving the problems which confront the players. If characters are not kept distinct, they will soon merge into one super-character. Not only would this destroy the variety of the game, but it would also kill the game, for the super-character would soon have nothing left to challenge him or her, and the players would grow bored and move on to something which was fun.

The same reasoning precludes many of the proposed character classes which enthusiasts wish to add. Usually such classes are either an unnecessary variation on an existing class, are too obtuse to be interesting, or are endowed with sufficient prowess to assure that they would rule the campaign for whomever chose to play as such (most certainly their authors). Similarly, multi-classed character types such as elves and dwarves are limited in most class progressions in order to assure game balance. That this can be justified by game logic, pointing out that humankind triumphs and rules other life forms in most if not all myths and mythos, is a pleasant superfluity.

Combat is the most frequently abused area, for here many would-be game inventors feel they have sufficient expertise to design a better system. Perhaps someone will eventually do so, but the examples to date are somewhat less than inspiring of confidence. The "critical hit" or "double damage" on a "to hit" die roll of 20 is particularly offensive to the precepts of the D&D game. Two reciprocal rules which go with such a system are seldom, if ever, mentioned: 1) opponents scoring a natural 20 will likewise cause a double-damage hit or critical hit upon player characters; and 2) as a 20 indicates a perfect hit, a 1 must indicate a perfect miss, so that any time a 1 is rolled on the "to hit" die, the attacker must roll to find if he or she has broken his or her weapon, dropped it, or missed so badly as to strike an ally nearby. When these additions are suggested, the matter is usually dropped, but the point must be made that the whole game system is perverted, and the game possibly ruined, by the inclusion of "instant death" rules, be they aimed at monsters or characters. In the former case, they imbalance the play and move the challenge which has been carefully placed into the D&D system. In the latter, "instant death" no longer allows participants to use judgement when playing. Certainly some monsters are capable of delivering death at a single stroke, but players know these monsters and can take precautions. If everything that is faced has an excellent chance to kill characters, they will surely die before long. Then the game loses its continuity and appeal, for lasting character identification cannot be developed.

There are a number of foolish misconceptions which tend to periodically crop up also. Weapons expertise is one. Given the basic assumption that those normally employing weapons are typical of the medieval period, and the D&D game is plainly stated to be a medieval fantasy game, it should follow in the minds of knowledgeable players that any fighting man worth the name made it a point to practice daily with all forms of weapons. There was a prejudice against the use of the bow by knights, granted. This is of no consequence in game terms. Any particular preference as to weapon type by a fighter most assuredly was not indicative of lack of ability with another one.

More to the point, however, the D&D rules presume that the adventurers are the elite, the cream of the cream. Each is a potential Hero, Archmage, and so on. Certainly each is also capable of employing a simple hand weapon to effect, and correctly utilizing any such weapon. The truth of the matter with respect to weapon expertise is, I believe, another attempt to move players closer to the "instant death" ability. For those who insist on giving weapons expertise bonuses due to the supposed extra training and ability of a character, I reply: What character could be more familiar and expert with a chosen weapon type than monsters born and bred to their fangs, claws, hooves, horns, and other body weaponry? Therefore, the monsters must likewise receive weapons expertise bonuses. While this does put part of the system into balance again, it moves player characters closer to situations where they can be killed before they can opt to follow a course of action aimed at extricating themselves. Again, this feature is undesirable and must be discarded.

In general, the enjoyment of a D&D adventure is the fantasy: identification with a supernormal character, the challenges presented to this character as he or she seeks to gain gold and glory (experience levels and magical items), the images conjured up in the participants' minds as they explore weird labyrinths underground and forsaken wilderness above, and of course the satisfaction of *defeating* opponents and gaining some fabulous treasure. This is the stuff of which the game is made. Protracted combat situations which stress "realism" will destroy the popularity of the game as surely would the inclusion of creatures which always slay any characters they fight. The players desire *action*, but all except the odd few will readily tell you that endless die-rolling to determine where their character will defend against an attack, and so on, are the opposite of action; they are tedious. Furthermore, such systems are totally extraneous to the D&D system. Although they might not ruin the game for a particular group of players, general inclusion in the published rules would certainly turn off the majority of enthusiasts. It would turn me to other pursuits, for if I was interested in that sort of game I would be playing a simulation of something historical, not a fantasy game.

Spell point systems are also in vogue in some quarters. Strangely enough, "realism" (what is *realistic* magic?) is used as one of the principal reasons for the use of spell points. The D&D magic system is drawn directly from *Chainmail*, which, in turn, was inspired by the superb writing of Jack Vance. This "Vancian" magic system works splendidly in the game. If it has any fault, it is toward making characters who are magic-users too powerful. This sort of fault is better corrected within the existing framework of the game — by requiring more time to cast spells, by making magic-users progress more slowly in experience levels. Spell points add nothing to the game except more complication, more record-keeping, more wasted time, and a precept which is totally foreign to the rest of the game.

There are numerous additions and supplemental pieces which are neither detrimental nor particularly useful to the game. If players find them enjoyable, there is certainly no reason why their particular group cannot include such material in their particular campaign. The important factor is the integrity of the game as a whole. The use of *social level* (as originally conceived by Game Designers' Workshop and appearing in *En Garde*) is a good case in point. In the overall scheme of the game, social level is unimportant to a band of adventurers going out to slay monsters and gain treasure. However, in a campaign it can be used as scenario background — or not used — as the referee and his or her players see fit. Basically, social level means nothing to adventurers such as Conan, Fafhrd and Gray Mouser, Elric, Kugel the Clever, etc. Yet in a game, it can be a handy referee's tool for setting a stage or rewarding player characters. It does not pervert the intent of the game, it does not destroy game systems. It can be readily included, or ignored, without effect upon the whole.

Certain publications have accused TSR of maintaining a proprietary interest in the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS name from a purely mercenary motivation. Oddly enough, some individuals also fault TSR for being careful to protect its trademarks and its copyrights and its reputation, blandly faulting the desire to profit from our labors. The D&D name is inseparable from

TSR. The repute of the game and of the company are high because we honestly strive to give buyers real value for their money. TSR's customers, the buyers of D&D products, *et al*, are satisfied and then some, for what they have purchased has provided them hours of enjoyment and will continue to do so for many more hours. Just as we must prevent the spoiling of the game by tinkering with the integral systems, we also take every possible step to prevent exploitation of D&D enthusiasts by publishers who hide shoddy products under a fantasy role-playing guise. We cannot stop them from putting worthless material into print, but we can certainly make it clear that it is neither recommended nor approved for use with the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game.

To some extent, this same exploitation continually takes place in fantasy-gaming publications. Many seek to trade on the game's popularity by offering "new" or "variant" systems which fit only with the D&D rules, even though the game is not actually named. Buy them if you have the money to throw away, but at peril of your campaign, do not use material which alters the basic precepts of the game.

Commerce is neither immoral or unethical. It is part and parcel of our world. Workers are paid for their services, just as authors and publishers receive financial gain for what they provide. The same individual has a family which depends upon commerce to support itself (and possibly the individual, if he or she is a student). The individual does, or will one day, work to earn his or her own living. But our interest in the D&D name and the game extends beyond money and even beyond reputation. TSR created the whole of fantasy role-playing gaming as a hobby, and we are proud of this achievement. Pride in what we have accomplished gives us a paternal right to protect our creation. Be glad, for it will help to assure that your game remains a good one, and that when you see "D&D" on a product you will have reasonable expectations with respect to quality. Use your imagination and creativity when you play a D&D game, for there is much room within its parameters for individuality and personalization; always keep in mind that everything in the game is there for a reason, that major systems are carefully geared and balanced to mesh together to make a workable whole. Changing one part could well ruin the rest, and then what would you play?

FEB. 1979 #22

The DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game pioneered role-playing in the gaming hobby. It brought fantasy before hobbyists, and it set before them a game-form most had never heard of. Perhaps 150,000 persons now play the game, but it was by no means an instant success. The first 1,000 boxed sets, assembled and labeled by hand, took eleven months to sell (and Tactical Studies Rules was thrilled). Finally, a third printing of 2,000 sold in five months. So from January 1974 to December 1975, only 4,000 sets of the original version of the game were in circulation. (Of course, I have no way of knowing how many pirated copies were in existence; some estimates place the figure at about 20% of the total sales, some as high as 50%. In any case, 5,000 or 6,000 sets was certainly nothing to set the gaming world on fire, or was it?) Today the Basic Set sells 4,000 copies per *month*, and the sales graph is upwards.

A month has not gone by in the last two years when I haven't been interviewed by one or more newspaper writers or independent journalists who want to know all about the D&D® game and the concepts behind it. I have likewise been interviewed by radio and TV news media, generally for the same reason. At the risk of claiming too much for the game, I have lately taken to likening the whole to Aristotle's *Poetics*, carrying the analogy to even more ridiculous heights by stating that each Dungeon Master uses the rules to become a playwrite (hopefully one of Shakespearean stature), scripting only plot outlines however, and the players become the thespians.

Before incredulity slackens so as to allow the interviewer to become hostile, I hasten to add that the analogy applies only to the basic parts of the whole pastime, not to the actual merits of the game, its DMs, or its players. If you consider the game, the analogy is actually quite apt. The DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game is like none other in that it requires the game master to create part or all of a fantasy world. Players must then become *personae* in this place and interact with the other populace. This is, of course, a tall order for all concerned — rules, DM, and players alike.

Relating a basic adventure, an episodic game session in the campaign, to a trip in an underground labyrinth does help the uninitiated interviewers to understand the simplest D&D fundamentals — discover an unknown area, move around in it by means of descriptive narration from the Dungeon Master, overcome whatever obstacles are there (traps, problems, monsters), and return with whatever has been gained during the course of the whole. The DM takes the part of everything in this fantasy world which is not operated by a player. While this should not mean it is then a game of DM versus the players, it does mean that it is a co-operative game where players must interact successfully amongst themselves first, and non-hostile portions of the campaign milieu thereafter, in order to be suc-

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At about this point I am always asked: "Well, then, how do you win? Who wins?!" The answer is: *Everybody* — providing that the game is well run. The DM gets the satisfaction of testing his abilities against those of the players, the fun of taking the non-player parts, and the accolades of participants when a particularly well-done adventure or series has been completed. Players enjoy the challenges of each situation and have the prospect of continuing adventures and puzzles to confront them, each with his or her game persona. Thus, all who take part in the campaign get something besides a momentary diversion. Winning no more applies to a D&D game than it does to real life. The successful DMs and players gain renown via their campaigns or their superior characters. To enthusiasts of the game, this is far more satisfying than triumphing in a single game or whole series of games.

Simply stated, the D&D game is a multi-player game of fantasy role-playing, where the rules give systems of resolution for common game occurrences, lists and explanations of things which are not actual (monsters, spells, magic items, etc.), systems for interaction, and suggestions as to how to put this into the campaign, i.e. create the milieu. Once begun, the campaign continues until the DM and/or all of the players decide it should end. As with any exercise in fantasy, it requires suspension of disbelief. Those who find the game interesting will soon enough thereafter create their own sort of involvement and belief. But why is such a game (and similar fantasy role-playing games, for that matter) so popular? What is its appeal?

Our modern world has few, if any, frontiers. We can no longer escape to the frontier of the West, explore darkest Africa, sail to the South Seas. Even Alaska and the Amazon jungles will soon be lost as wild frontier areas. Furthermore, adventures are not generally possible anymore. The frontiers are receding into memories, modern communications make all of the world available to casual travellers, and the most backward places are becoming more and more civilized. Certainly it is still possible to go scuba diving, mountain climbing, auto racing, sky diving, and so on. These are expensive and risky endeavors, for no real purpose in most cases. One can also have adventures as a criminal, or possibly as an agent of the government (if one is sufficiently qualified), but the former is distasteful to say the least, and the latter is most unlikely. Americans, with more leisure time today than ever, crave entertainment. Some desire adventure and excitement. Obviously, various entertainment media are doing big business — TV, motion pictures, spectator sports, recreational vehicles, sporting goods, book publishers, and game manufacturers are all growing. "Escape fiction" sells better today than ever, and witness the success of the recent science-fiction and fantasy films.

Looking toward outer space and the future for new frontiers and adventure is logical. The universe has fascinated mankind since recorded history, and today it seems quite probable that within a few decades numbers of us will live off of the earth, and in a century or so we will travel to the stars. Perhaps there will be frontiers and adventure enough then for all who care to test their mettle. But it is no less surprising for us to look into the realms of fantasy for imagined adventure. Most literate people grow up on a diet of fairy tales, Walt Disney, and comic-book superheroes. We somehow relate to stories of young princes going out into the world to seek their fortune, of knights rescuing maidens in distress and slaying dragons, of dealings with wicked magicians and evil witches. The myth of all peoples contain great stocks of such fantasy lore. If nothing else, the desire to believe in such seems to be innate in humanity. Whether or not there are parallel worlds or places where fantastic creatures actually live and magic works is not germane, for most of us are familiar with the concepts as if they were actual, and we have a desire to become involved, if only vicariously, amongst such heroic epics of magic and monsters. It is therefore scarcely surprising that a game which directly involves participants in a make-believe world of just such a nature should prove popular; and had I reasoned out the enthusiasm it roused amongst the first few who played it, it would have been evident that the D&D game was destined to become very popular indeed. (Naturally, hindsight is usually a 20/20 proposition, and the fact is, the game was originally written for a small audience of devoted miniatures players....)

If millions take to the fantasy world of J.R.R. Tolkien, and nearly as many follow the heroic feats of Conan, the market potential of a game system which provides participants with a pastime which creates play resembling these adventuresome worlds and their inhabitants is bounded only by its accessibility. Access has two prominent aspects: Availability is the first; that is, are potential players informed of the fact that the game exists, and are they able to physically obtain it? Difficulty is the second, for if once obtained the game is so abstruse as to be playable only by persons with intelligence far above the norm, or if the game demands a volume of preliminary work which is prohibitive for the normal individual, this will be recognized and the offering will be shunned even if it is available. The D&D system failed on both counts, and still its following grew. Today we are putting the D&D game onto the track where it is envisioned it will have both maximum availability and minimum difficulty. This is best illustrated in the D&D Basic Set.

Well over two years ago we recognized that there was a need for an introductory form of the game. In 1977 the colorfully boxed Basic Set was published. It contained simplified, more clearly written rules, dungeon geomorphs, selections of monsters and treasures to place in these dungeons, and a set of polyhedra dice — in short, all that a group of beginning players need to start play with relative ease. Later editions have cleaned up most of the flaws in the first, and the newest will do away with the geomorphs and the list of monsters and treasures in favor of a complete basic module, so that difficulty will be reduced even further.

This should broaden the game's appeal to a base in the millions, and then the major factor becomes availability. Popular demand always increases availability, and the D&D game has been blessed by its enthusiasts most generously in this regard. Coupled with the work being done by TSR to publicize and promote the game, the availability factor will also be maximized over the next few years. Finally, to maintain interest, a series of new and interesting modular dungeon and outdoor scenarios, as well as more playing aids, will be made available periodically. The number of D&D players should certainly continue to mushroom for several years.

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Fanatical game hobbyists often express the opinion that the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS system will be an ever-expanding, always improving one. TSR and I see it a bit differently. Currently, the D&D concept is moving in two directions. There is the "Original" game system and the new ADVANCED D&D® system. New participants can move from the "Basic Set" into either form without undue difficulty — especially as playing aid offerings become more numerous, and that is in process now. Americans have somehow come to equate change with improvement. Somehow the school of continuing evolution has conceived that the D&D system can go on in a state of flux, each new version "new and improved!" From a standpoint of sales, I beam broadly at the very thought of an unending string of new, improved, super, energized, versions of the game being hyped to the loyal followers of the gaming hobby in general and role-playing fantasy games in particular. As a game designer I do not agree, particularly as a gamer who began with chess. The original could benefit from a careful reorganization and expansion to clarify things, and this might be done at some future time. As all of the AD&D™ system is not written yet, it is a bit early for prognostication, but I envision only minor expansions and some rules amending on a gradual, edition to edition, basis. When you have a fine product, it is time to let well enough alone. I do not believe that hobbyists and casual players should be continually barraged with new rules, new systems, and new drains on their purses. Certainly there will be changes, for the game is not perfect; but I do not believe the game is so imperfect as to require constant improvement.

Does this mean that the game will be at a dead end when the last of the AD&D books is published? Hardly! Modules and similar material will continue to be released so as to make the DM's task easier and his or her campaign better. Quite frankly, the appeal of the D&D game rests principally upon the broad shoulders of the hard-working Dungeon Masters. The rules never need improvement if the DM is doing a proper job, but of course he or she can do so only if the rules are sufficient to allow this. With refined rules and modular additions, all aspects of a long-lived and exciting campaign will unquestionably be there for the DM to employ. Will the D&D system dead-end when its novelty dies? That is impossible to answer. It is my personal opinion that the game form is a classic which is of the same stamp as chess and *Monopoly*; time will be the judge. No doubt there is a limit to the appeal of the game in any of its current forms. If tens of millions play a relatively simple, social sort of a game such as *Monopoly*, it is a sure thing a far more difficult activity such as the D&D game will have a much more limited audience. Since the game cannot be simplified beyond a certain point, we look to another means of popularizing it.

A D&D game can be played on a computer. Computers are most certainly a big aspect of the near future, particularly the home computer. Non-programmable computer games are already making big inroads in the toy and hobby market. They will grow still more, and soon programmable games will join this trend. D&D program cassettes plugged into a home computer would obviate the need for a DM or other players. The labor of setting up a campaign or the necessity of having a fairly large group to play in it would be removed; graphic display would be exciting; and the computer would slave away doing the record work and mechanics necessary to the game, giving nearly instantaneous results to the player or players. Computerization has other benefits. Such games would not destroy the human-run campaign but would supplement game participation.

All that being so, the reader may jusifiably inquire as to the purpose of this column. Well, since I make no claim to perfection, no such claim can be made for the AD&D or D&D games. This column will cover controversial rules or systems, problem and so-called problem areas, and consider new material as well. If the games are not to be continually changing and "evolving," neither is it envisioned that they have reached such a state of perfection so as to become immutable. What appears herein is discussion that will sometimes lead to alteration, amendment, or expansion of one or the other system. Initially, what you read here will be direct from me, but all DMs — and players also — are invited to submit articles of high calibre. A glance at the introductory sections of all of the works comprising the D&D and AD&D systems shows many individuals contributed to the designs. The list in the AD&D Dungeon Masters Guide is longer still. All individuals and the audience at large are cordially invited to submit their thoughts and opinions on pertinent matters. If I am not to be "the great god Gygax," a claim I never made nor supported, there must be input which presents argumentation and systems which are meaningful alternatives to *replace* or *augment* existing rules and systems. This is not to say that anyone's favorite variant, even if well designed, is likely to become a D&D or AD&D product, but at worst reasons for why it is unacceptable will be given, and the possible results could be a major change in the game. So, here is your forum.

Much about melee

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There is some controversy regarding the system of resolving individual battles used in the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game and the somewhat similar melee system which is part of the ADVANCED D&D® rules. The meat of the D&D® system is the concept of pure adventure, the challenge of the unknown, facing the unexpected and overcoming all obstacles. At times this requires combat with spells, missiles, and hand-to-hand fighting. How crucial to the game as a whole is the melee? What part should it play? Is "realism" an important consideration?

To put the whole matter into perspective, it is necessary to point out that there is probably only a small percentage of the whole concerned with possible shortcomings in the melee system, but even 1% to perhaps 5% of an audience of well over 100,000 enthusiasts is too large a number to be ignored. To the majority who do not have problems with the rationale of fantasy melee as presented in the D&D rules, what follows will serve to strengthen your understanding of the processes and their relationship to the whole game. For those who doubt the validity of D&D combat systems, the expostulation will at least demonstrate the logic of the systems, and perhaps justify them to the extent that you will be able to use them with complete assurance that they are faithful representations of the combat potential of the figures concerned.

There can be no question as to the central theme of the game. It is the creation and development of the game persona, the fantastic player character who is to interact with his or her environment — hopefully to develop into a commanding figure in the milieu. In order to do so, the player character must undergo a continuing series of activities which are dictated by the campaign at large and the Dungeon Master in particular. Interaction can be the mundane affairs of food, equipment and

shelter, or it can be dealing with non-player characters in only slightly less routine things such as hiring men-at-arms, treating with local officials, and so on. But from even these everyday affairs can develop *adventures*, and adventurers are, of course, the meat of the D&D system; for it is by means of adventuring that player characters gain acumen and the wealth and wherewithal to increase in ability level. The experience, actual as well as that awarded by the DM, is gained in the course of successive adventures, and in the context of those adventures it is most common to engage in combat.

Hacking and slewing should not, of course, be the first refuge of the beleaguered D&D player, let alone his or her initial resort when confronted with a problem situation. Naturally enough, a well run campaign will offer a sufficient number of alternatives as well as situations which encourage thinking, negotiation, and alternatives to physical force, by means of careful prompting or object lessons in the negative form. Aside from this, however, combat and melee will certainly occupy a considerable amount of time during any given adventure, at least on the average. Spell and missile combat do not consume any appreciable amount of time, but as they are also often a part of an overall melee, these factors must be considered along with hand-to-hand fighting.

What must be simulated in melee combat are the thrusts and blows (smashing and cutting) of weapons wielded as well as the natural body weaponry of monsters — teeth, claws, and so forth. Individual combat of this sort can be made exceptionally detailed by inclusion of such factors as armor, weapon(s), reflex speed, agility, position of weapon (left or right hand or both), training, strength, height, weight, tactics chosen (attack, defend, or a combination), location of successive blows, and results of injury to specific areas. If, in fact, the D&D game was a simulation of hand-to-hand combat utilizing miniature figurines, such detail would be highly desirable. The game is one of adventure, though, and combats of a protracted nature (several hours minimum of six or more player characters are considered involved against one or more opponents each) are undesirable, as the majority of participants are most definitely *not* miniature battle game enthusiasts. Time could be reduced considerably by the inclusion of such factors as death blows — a kill at a single stroke, exceptionally high amounts of damage — or perhaps a modified form of killing at a single stroke, featuring specific hit location coupled with specific body hit points, and special results from hits — unconsciousness, loss of member, incapacitation of member, etc.

Close simulation of actual hand-to-hand combat and inclusion of immediate-result strokes have overall disadvantages from the standpoint of the game as a whole. Obviously, much of the excitement and action is not found in melee, and even shortening the process by adding in death strokes and the like causes undue emphasis on such combat. Furthermore, the D&D game is a role-playing campaign where much of the real enjoyment for participants comes from the gradual development of the game personae and their continuing exploits, whether successes or failures. In a system already fraught with numberless possibilities of instant death — spells, poison, breath and gaze weapons, and traps — it is too much to force players to face yet another. Melee combat is nearly certain to be a part of each and every adventure. It has sufficient element of danger to make the possibility of character death highly likely, but it also allows the wise to withdraw if things get too tough —most of the time, in any case.

The D&D combat systems are not all that "unrealistic" either, as will be discussed hereafter. The systems are designed to provide relative speed of resolution without either bogging down the referee in a morass of paperwork or giving high probability of death to participants' personae. Certainly, the longer and more involved the melee procedure, the more work and boredom for the Dungeon Master, while fast systems are fun but deadly to player characters (if such systems are challenging and equitable) and tend to discourage participants from long-term commitment to a campaign, for they cannot relate to a world in which they are but the briefest of candles, so to speak.

In order to minutely examine the combat system as used in the AD&D™ game, an example of play is appropriate. Consider a party of adventurers trekking through a dungeon's 10-foot-wide corridor when they come upon a chamber housing a troop of gnoll guards. Let us assume that our party of adventurers is both well balanced in character race and class. They have a dwarf, a gnome, and a halfling in the front rank. Behind them are two half-elves. The last rank consists of three humans. Although there are eight characters, all of them are able to take an active part in the coming engagement; spells and missiles can be discharged from the rear or middle rows. The center-rank characters will also be able to engage in hand-to-hand combat if they have equipped themselves with spears or thrusting pole arms which are of a size useful in the surroundings. The front rank can initially use spells or missiles and then engage in melee with center-rank support, assuming that the party was not surprised. Whether or not any exchange of missiles and spells takes place is immaterial to the example, for it is melee which is the activity in question. Let us then move on to where the adventurers are locked in combat with the gnolls.

Each melee round is considered to be a one-minute period, with a further division into ten segments of six seconds each for determination of missile fire, spell casting and the striking of multiple telling blows. Note that during the course of a round there are assumed to be a number of parries, feints, and non-telling attacks made by opponents. The one (or several) dice roll (or rolls) made for each adversary, however, determines if a *telling* attack is made. If there is a hit indicated, some damage has been done; if a miss is rolled, then the opponent managed to block or avoid the attack.

If the participants picture the melee as somewhat analogous to a boxing match, they will have a correct grasp of the rationale used in designing the melee system. During the course of a melee round there is movement, there are many attacks which do not score, and each "to hit" roll indicates that there is an opening which may or may not allow a telling attack. In a recent letter, Don Turnbull stated that he envisioned that three sorts of attacks were continually taking place during melee:

1) attacks which had no chance of hitting, including feints, parries, and the like;

2) attacks which had a chance of doing damage but which missed as indicated by the die roll; and

3) attacks which were telling as indicated by the die roll and subsequent damage determination.

This is a correct summation of what the D&D melee procedure subsumes. Note that the skill factor of higher-level fighters — as well as natural abilities and/or the speed of some monsters — allows more than one opportunity per melee round of scoring a telling attack, as those character and creature types are more able to take advantage of openings left by adversaries

''Melee in the D&D system is certainly a crucial factor, and it must not be warped at the risk of spoiling the whole game. Likewise, it is not unrealistic – if there is such a thing as ''realism'' in a game ... filled with the unreal assumptions of dragons, magic spells, and so on.''

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during the course of sparring, Similarly, zero-level men, and monsters under one full hit die, are considered as being less able to defend; thus, opponents of two or more levels or hit dice are able to get in one telling blow for each such level or hit die.

This melee system also hinges on the number of hit points assigned to characters. As I have repeatedly pointed out, if a rhinoceros can take a maximum amount of damage equal to eight or nine eight-sided dice, a maximum of 64 or 72 hit points of damage to kill, it is positively absurd to assume that an 8th-level fighter with average scores on his or her hit dice and an 18 constitution, thus having 76 hit points, can physically withstand more punishment than a rhino before being killed. Hit points are a combination of actual physical constitution, skill at the avoidance of taking real physical damage, luck and/or magical or divine factors. Ten points of damage dealt to a rhino indicates a considerable wound, while the same damage sustained by the 8th-level fighter indicates a near miss, a slight wound, and a bit of luck used up, a bit of fatigue piling up against his or her skill at avoiding the fatal cut or thrust. So even when a hit is scored in melee combat, it is more often than not a grazing blow, a mere light wound which would have been fatal (or nearly so) to a lesser mortal. If sufficient numbers of such wounds accrue to the character, however, stamina, skill, and luck will eventually run out, and an attack will strike home....

I am firmly convinced that this system is superior to all others so far conceived and published. It reflects actual combat reasonably, for weaponry, armor (protection and speed and magical factors), and skill level, and allows for a limited amount of choice as to attacking or defending. It does not require participants to keep track of more than a minimal amount of information, it is quite fast, and it does not place undue burden upon the Dungeon Master. It allows those involved in combat to opt to retire if they are taking too much damage, although this does not necessarily guarantee that they will succeed or that the opponents will not strike a teling blow prior to such retreat. Means of dealing fatal damage at a single stroke or in a single melee routine are kept to a minimum commensurate with the excitement level of the system. Poison, weapons which deliver a fatal blow, etc., are rare or obvious. Thus, participants know that a giant snake or scorpion can fell them with a single strike with poison; they are aware that a dragon or a 12-headed hydra or a cloud giant can deliver considerable amounts of damage when they succeed in striking; and they also are aware that it is quite unlikely that an opponent will have a *sword of sharpness*, a *vorpal blade*, or some similarly deadly weapon. Melee, then, albeit a common enough occurrence, is a calculated risk which participants can usually determine before engaging in as to their likelihood of success; and even if the hazards are found to be too severe, they can often retract their characters to fight again another day.

Of course, everyone will not be satisfied with the combat system as presented. If DM and players desire a more complex and time-consuming method of determining melee combat, or if they wish a more detailed but shorter system, who can say them nay?

However, care must be taken to make certain that the net effect is the same as if the correct system had been employed, or else the melee will become imbalanced. If combat is distorted to favor the player characters, they will rise in experience levels too rapidly, and participants will become bored with a game which offers no real challenge and whose results are always a foregone conclusion. If melee is changed to favor the adversaries of player characters, such as by inclusion of extra or special damage when a high number is rolled on a "to hit" die, the net result will also be a loss of interest in the campaign. How does a rule for double damage on a die roll of 20 favor monsters and spoil a campaign? If only players are allowed such extra damage, then the former case of imbalance in favor of the players over their adversaries is in effect. If monsters are allowed such a benefit, it means the chances of surviving a melee, or withdrawing from combat if things are not going well, are sharply reduced. That means that character survival will be less likely. If players cannot develop and identify with a long-lived character, they will lose interest in the game. Terry Kuntz developed a system which allowed for telling strokes in an unpublished game he developed to recreate the epic adventures of Robin Hood *et al*. To mitigate against the possible loss at a single stroke, he also included a saving throw which allowed avoidance of such death blows, and the chance of making a successful saving throw increased as the character successfully engaged in combats, i.e. gained experience. This sort of approach is obviously possible, but it requires a highly competent designer to develop.

Melee in the D&D system is certainly a crucial factor, and it must not be warped at the risk of spoiling the whole game. Likewise, it is not unrealistic — if there is such a thing as "realism" in a game, particularly a game filled with the unreal assumptions of dragons, magic spells, and so on. The D&D melee combat system subsumes all sorts of variable factors in a system which must deal with imaginary monsters, magic-endowed weaponry, and make-believe characters and abilities. It does so in the form as to allow referees to handle the affair as rapidly as possible, while keeping balance between player characters and opponents, and still allowing the players the chance of withdrawing their characters if the going gets too rough. As melee combat is so common an occurrence during the course of each adventure, brevity, equitability, and options must be carefully balanced.

Someone recently asked how I could include a rule regarding weapons proficiency in the AD&D rules after decrying what they viewed as a similar system: bonuses for expertise with weapons. The AD&D system, in fact, penalizes characters for using weapons which they do not have expertise with. Obviously, this is entirely different in its effect upon combat. Penalties do not change the balance between character and adversary, for the player can always opt to use non-penalized weapons for his or her character.

It also makes the game more challenging by further defining differences in character classes and causing certain weapons to be more desirable than others: i.e., will the *magic hammer +1* be useful to the cleric? It likewise adds choices. All this, rather than offering still another method whereby characters can more easily defeat opponents and have less challenge. How can one be mistaken as a variation of the other? The answer there is that the results of the two systems were not reflected upon. With a more perfect understanding of the combat system and its purposes, the inquirer will certainly be able to reason the thing through without difficulty and avoid spoiling the game in the name of "realism."

Realism does have a function in the D&D system, of course. It is the tool of the DM who is confronted by a situation which is not covered in the rules. With the number of variables involved in a game such as this, there is no possibility of avoiding situations which are not spelled out in the book. The spirit of the

rules can be a guideline, as can the overall aim of rules which apply to general cases, but when a specific situation arises, judgement must often come into play.

Sean Cleary commented on this in a letter about common misunderstandings and difficulties encountered by the DM. While the AD&D system is absolutely clear, for example, that clerics have but one chance to attempt to turn undead, and that those struck by undead have no saving throw (life level is drained!), it was impossible to include all the minutiae in the rules. To illustrate further, consider the example of missile fire into a melee. Generally, the chances of hitting a friend instead of a foe is the ratio of the two in the melee. With small foes, the ratio is adjusted accordingly; i.e., two humans fighting four kobolds give about equal probabilities of hitting either. Huge foes make it almost impossible to strike a friend; i.e., aiming at a 12-foot-tall giant's upper torso is quite unlikely to endanger the 6' tall human of a *javelin of lightning bolts* in a melee where a human and a giant are engaged. The missile strikes the giant; where does its stroke of lightning travel? Common sense and reality indicate that the angle of the javelin when it struck the giant will dictate that the stroke will travel in a straight line back along the shaft, and the rest is a matter of typical positions and angles — if the human was generally before the giant, and the javelin was thrown from behind the human, the trajectory of the missile will be a relatively straight line ending in the shaft of the weapon and indicating the course of the bolt of lightning backwards. The giant's human opponent will not be struck by the stroke, but the lightning will most probably come close. Therefore, if the human is in metal armor, a saving throw should be made to determine if he or she takes half or no damage.

In like manner, reality can illustrate probabilities. If three husky players are placed shoulder to shoulder, distances added for armor, and additional spaces added for weapon play, the DM can estimate what activities can take place in a given amount of space. Determination of how many persons can pass through a door 5 feet wide can be made with relative ease — two can proceed carefully, but if two or three rush to pass through at the same time a momentary jam can occur. How long should the jam last? How long would people remain so wedged? With an added factor for inflexible pieces of plate mail, the answer is probably one or two segments of a round. Of course, during this period the jammed characters cannot attack or defend, so no shield protection or dexterity bonus to armor class would apply, and an arbitrary bonus of +4 could be given to any attackers (an arbitrary penalty of -4 on saving throws follows).

The melee systems used in the D&D rules are by no means sacrosanct. Changes can be made if they are done intelligently by a knowledgeable individual who thoroughly understands the whole design. Similarly, "realism" is a part of melee, for the DM must refer to it continually to adjudicate combat situations where no rules exist, and this handling is of utmost importance in maintaining a balanced melee procedure. With this truly important input from the referee, it is my firm belief that the D&D system of combat is not only adequate but actually unsurpassed by any rival so-called "improvement" and "realistic" methods. The latter add complication and unnecessary record-keeping, or otherwise distort the aim of a role-playing game —character survival and identification. What is foisted off on the gullible is typically a hodgepodge of arbitrary rulings which are claimed to give "realism" to a make-believe game. Within the scope of the whole game surrounding such systems, they might or might not work well enough, but seldom will these systems fit into a D&D campaign regardless of the engineering attempts of well-meaning referees.

The logic of the D&D melee systems is simple: They reasonably reflect fantastic combat and they work damn well from all standpoints. My advice is to leave well enough alone and accept the game for what it is. If you must have more detail in melee, switch to another game, for the combat portions of the D&D rules are integral, and unsuccessful attempts to change melee will result in spoiling the whole. Better to start fresh than to find that much time and effort has been wasted on a dead-end variant.

Character social class

MAY 1979 #25

Insertion of randomly determined social class is sometimes touted as an improvement or valuable addition to the existing D&D® game system. This sort of assertion seems valid on the face of it, for doesn't the game benefit from assigning social classes to player characters? Isn't a new dimension added when the rank of characters is known and considered? Before answering these questions, consider from whence the idea of social classes came. Professor M.A.R. Barker suggested social classes in the instruction manual for his monumental game, *Empire of The Petal Throne*. The *En Garde!* game by Game Designers' Workshop contains a lengthy treatment of social class and birth tables. Those who saw these works and decided to insert them into a D&D game failed to recognize one important singularity common to each of the aforementioned games which is not also possessed by either the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® or ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game. Both the world of Tekumel and that of the Three Musketeers *et al* have a complex and detailed social system alrady devised for them —one from the creativity of Prof. Barker, the other drawn from the history and legends of the period of Cardinal Richelieu, the early 17th century. The D&D system has no such cultural and social background.

Because the game does not have a predetermined culture and social structure, it is foolish to plug in a system which assigns a class rating to characters, unless the social class determination is very basic and non-specific, such as:

01-75 = character is of common background
76-95 = character is of aristocratic background
96-00 = character is of upper-class background

Note that this sort of determination is not particularly useful, but it does not preordain a social order, either. Use of a more specific method causes the Dungeon Master to automatically accept a social order he or she may well have no desire to

include in the campaign, for lack of knowledge or because of personal preference, or for any other reason. All of the social-distinction tables assume nobility or offices or professions which are not universal to all cultures. Use of such tables means that the DM has accepted the premise that his or her campaign, in fact, has such classes of nobles, professions, or offices.

The D&D and AD&D™ rules represent fantastic medieval game systems. This does not just mean medieval in the European sense, although a campaign milieu based loosely upon mythical feudal Europe is not precluded. However, it could as well be set in the Near East or Far East, in a mythical place, in a mythos with an ancient-medieval atmosphere (such as Robert E. Howard's "Hyborean Age"), or just about any other desired milieu. The important factor is medieval *technology*, not necessarily feudalism with primogeniture, entail, and a Salic Law.

So-called birth tables are likewise of highly questionable value to DMs. These tables dictate to the Dungeon Master the rank of a *male* player character's birth (first, second, third, etc.). Again, the information is useful only when a culture which is basically feudal European (with primogeniture, entail, and Salic Laws regarding inheritance and titles) is considered. What if some other system is desired by the DM? Out the window with the birth tables, of course. Furthermore, even if a basically feudal society is presupposed in the campaign, of what use are birth tables which indicate that a player character is a first-born son of a ruling monarch or major noble? How can one conceive of such a personage going out adventuring at the risk of life and limb?! Has the individual abdicated his inheritance? Does he have amnesia? Where are his guards and retainers? Does his sire know what he is doing and where?

And all of this when a compatible social order is considered. Now envision use of such systems in a milieu which is neither feudal nor male-oriented — a hierarchy based on matriarchal principles, for example. Inclusion of such tables simply is unthinkable. For these very reasons, the D&D rules do not contain any systems of social classification, for the DM must first decide upon the culture and society of the campaign before any valid system can be designed, and there are far too many variables, so the task is strictly that of the DM. Any detailed system will impose its own order upon the campaign, as well as possibly forcing the DM to accept certain premises regarding player characters which do not fit into the scheme of the milieu.

For the sake of discussion, a number of government forms are given below. Several of these names were coined on the spot in order to describe types of governments which would be applicable in a D&D campaign milieu. The list is by no means exhaustive, and DMs should feel right in devising any sort of government which is reasonable within the parameters they have set for their particular "worlds." Some possible forms of government are:

Anarchy — No formal government and no social classes.

Aristocracy — Government by a privileged class, this class so vested with power to rule being determined by virtually any circumstances of social or economic relevance.

Autocracy — Government which rests in self-derived, absolute power (an emperor or dictator is typically an autocrat, but the variations are many).

Bureaucracy — Government by department, rule being through the heads and chief administrators of the various departments of the system.

Confederacy — An alliance of possibly diverse governmental and social entities designed to promote the common weal.

Democracy — Government by the people, i.e. the established body of citizens, whether direct or through elected representatives.

Feodality — Feudal government where each authority derives authority and power from the one above and pledges fealty in like manner.

Geriatocracy — Government by the very old.

Gynarchy — Government by females only.

Hierarchy — Typically religious government with a structure somewhat similar to a feodality.

Magocracy — Government by professional magic-users.

Matriarchy — Government by the eldest females of whatever social units exist.

Militocracy — Government by military leaders and the armed forces in general.

Monarchy — Government by a single sovereign, usually hereditary, whether absolute in power or limited (such as the English monarchs were by the Magna Carta).

Oligarchy — Government by a few, usually absolute, rulers who are co-equal.

Pedocracy — Government by the learned and savants.

Plutocracy — Government by the wealthy.

Republic — A government of representatives of an established electorate.

Theocracy — God-rule, or rule by a god's direct representative.

Let us assume a campaign in which the DM desires to develop play around two diverse portions of the campaign area, in this instance a portion of a continental land mass. The western nation is an oligarchy, while the east is fragmented into numbers of small feudal states which the oligarchy keeps in constant turmoil and warfare through clever machination. If player characters begin in an eastern land — more likely a place for adventuring — the social order will tend to be feudal or semi-feudal. Let us further assume they start out in a small province of a small kingdom ruled by an absolute monarch. Near equals to the king are the peers of the realm — dukes, princes, the greatest churchmen, marquises, counts (or earls), great churchmen, viscounts, barons, and lesser great churchmen. Considered separately are knights, for those given this status by the king are peers, though those with lesser knighthoods still rank amongst the nobility. Of course, nobles are not necessarily knighted; and knighthood, unlike titles of nobility, cannot be inherited.

Below the nobility and knights is a broader class of society, the gentry. Gentlemen, or the gentle born, are from families with land holdings or great wealth from mercantile activity and the like. The great offices of the kingdom — chancellor, mar-

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shal, constable, etc. — are drawn from the nobles; but the lesser officeholders — bailiffs, magistrates, justices, etc. — will be drawn from the gentry. Outstanding members of the class will be knighted. Exceptional knights will be elevated to the peerage. Civic leaders are typically of this class.

Next after the gentry are the freemen and artisans. This class is comprised of small landowners, tradesmen, and skilled craftsmen. This class furnishes candidates for very minor offices of the government and will be active in the affairs of small community government, usually serving under the leadership of a gentleman. Rarely will members of this class be knighted.

Below the freemen and artisans come the laborers. These are free folk, but they have neither land nor skills. They are tenant farmers, workers, and peddlers. These folk come under all of the upper classes, and they can aspire to become freemen, although there is little likelihood of this move occurring, since money and opportunity are scarce.

The lowest class is far and away the largest. It is made up of servants, bondsmen, and serfs. Servants and bondsmen can eventually move into the laborer class, but serfs can have no such hope. They are confined by law to work the land for their liege lord, be it nobleman, churchman, gentleman, or even freeman.

Player characters beginning in this social order will be of noble origin only if the DM desires to include this as a factor. Frankly, only the younger sons of any noble family would have any reason to become adventurers in most cases, for the first-born will inherit the title and lands, and the second and third sons will certainly be provided for by means of clerical offices and government positions. Royal sons are *always* given titles and lands, regardless. If firstborn sons or royal family members become involved in a campaign as player characters, there must be a reason for this! Where will adventurers come from then? Not from the peasants, for they are probably absolutely forbidden to possess and bear arms, except when impressed into levied bands by their liege lords. Most adventurers will come from the laboring, freeman/artisan, or gentle class. The percentage of adventurers from each class is wholly dependent upon circumstances of the campaign, such as the largest urban area nearby, local and regional government, economic factors, etc. Let us suppose, for the sake of the example, that there is a 5% chance that a character will be from the lowest class, 10% chance of being from the laboring class, 30% from the class of freemen and artisans, and 50% from the gentle class. (More weight is given to the more privileged classes as they are more likely to be able to afford or otherwise have the means to have their sons — or daughters — given the background necessary to become an adventurer.) A 5% chance is also given for a lesser noble class background, for anything greater in percentage or higher in class would cause severe campaign anomalies. What does this all mean?

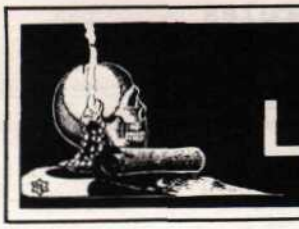
Well, starting funds and equipment must be adjusted to suit social class, although some weight can be given to the possibility of previous gains and losses to balance things out a bit. The major effect such social level determination would have is in the area of profession. All thieves and assassins could come only from the two lowest social classes. Clerics could come only from the levels above the two lowest. Magic-users could come only from the three highest levels. Paladins could come only from the highest class. In general, skills learned before becoming an adventurer are non-existent outside those peculiar to the profession of the character. For example, the son of a cheese maker will be sent away at a young age to receive a clerical education, or serve as an apprentice magic-user, without benefit of training in his father's business. Each adventurer will have basic skills and knowledge to his or her profession and little else. Fighters are the sole possible exception, for their apprenticeship would typically come later and consist of service with a levied or militia force, then as a mercenary or recruited man-at-arms, and only thereafter as a 1st-level (Veteran) fighter. Therefore, consideration to the possibility of the character possessing one or more skills in addition to fighting ability is not unreasonable. These skills would be commensurate with social class and background based upon the milieu.

D&D was purposely sketchy and vague regarding government and social systems, for not only would any attempt at detailing such information be of considerable length, but it would also take away the prerogatives of the DM. The governments and social systems of a campaign should be devised and developed directly by each individual DM with an overview of his or her entire campaign, both the introductory milieu, and the eventual scope of the "world" and the universe (or "multiverse") in which it is set. To force any order upon the DM is to curtail the scope he or she has in devising such settings. This is not to say that it is wrong to have package offerings such as the Judges Guild *City-State* or TSR's WORLD OF GREYHAWK™ Fantasy World Setting. In such as these, there can be no question in the purchaser's mind as to what is offered, a milieu which is already developed. The D&D rules are distinct, however, in that they instruct the DM as to how the game is played and mention only in passing that an entire "world" must be developed to house the campaign. The design of that world was left as the purview of each individual DM. The D&D popularity explosion, and human nature too, has tended to promote an increasing acceptance of social class distinctions and tables without due consideration for long-term campaign effects. At the very least this has resulted in some very odd settings, and at worst it has promoted the early demise of campaigns — typically with attendant reorganization and restarting, with revised ideas and rules. In order to save DMs from this difficulty, a thorough treatment of society and government forms is needed. Space and time disallow any in-depth treatment, even assuming a qualified authority could be found to do a thesis on the topic for us. DMs must be prepared to research the topic for themselves and develop systems which suit their needs.

The D&D system is principally medieval in respect to the technology of its arms, armor, and military arts. Even assuming the DM wishes to adhere to a medieval milieu, many sorts of historic government forms and social orders are available —the English monarchy, the Swiss Confederation, the Holy Roman electorate, the Byzantine Empire, various Arab states, or even the horse nomads of central Asia can be used as models, and that is but a sampling. Consider some of these other possible forms which may or may not draw upon historical bases. Then create the societies you desire.

It is obvious, then, that only the individual Dungeon Master is capable of properly establishing the social order of his or her individual campaign. Active inclusion of this consideration will necessarily place some further restrictions on player character choices as to profession, but this is not necessarily a drawback; and it might well be desirable in certain cases, as it will tend to encourage more fighters and reward them with bonuses in the area of knowledge and skills not possesed by other classes of adventurers. Inclusion of an overall social structure and classes is, of course, a necessity in any large campaign. This is not merely an embellishment; it is an integral part of the development of the milieu. Furthermore, inclusion of important personages from higher levels of society will tend to add greatly to the campaign in various ways. From taking service with a noble to rescuing a prince or princess, such interaction adds to the scope and meaning of the campaign.

What is also obvious is that social class is certainly not something to be added lightly, a factor to be sprinkled whimsically into the campaign or tossed into the whole by random chance. A well run and meaningful campaign will have an equally well devised social system and class determination according to forethought precepts. I suppose it is best summed up by the old adage, "Class will tell."...



Looking back, and to the future

JUNE 1979 #26

Adventures of the cerebral type have been with us for as long as mankind has told tales around campfires. Role-playing is at least as old as this, too, if one considers early religious or quasi-religious rites. Both advanced in form during the Golden Age of Greece, assuming forms which are close to those of today. How modern-era adventure games came into being is connected to all of this, for they owe their existence to the D&D® game, a fact which cannot be disputed.

Fantasy wargaming began before adventure gaming. In fact, it began before *Chainmail*. Tony Bath of England was conducting table-top battles roughly based on the "Hyborean Age" of Robert E. Howard's Conan stories years before the Fantasy Supplement of *Chainmail* was published. Similarly, role-playing has been common in wargaming for years — decades, I suspect, when one considers the length of time that the hobby has been pursued in England. I can recall being part of the nationwide game which was conceived by "The Ad Hoc Committee for the Re-Reinstitution of WWII," a group which was based at Stanford University. This writer was given the role of the Chinese Communist commander, while my friend, Don Kaye, was the Chinese Nationalist leader, and our associate, Terry Stafford of Chicago, was the British Far East Squadron Commander. Interesting and differing roles, but all involving thousands, or millions, of men to be commanded.

Our own local group, the Lake Geneva Tactical Studies Association, became involved in one-to-one gaming about 1970. Mike Reese and Leon Tucker, both strong proponents of WWII miniatures gaming, and Jeff Perren and I with our medieval miniatures, provided the group with many hours of enjoyment around the large sand table which reposed in the basement of my home. At various times our number commanded a squad or more of infantry, bands of marauding Vikings, a key bunker, a troop of Mongolian light horse, a platoon of AFVs, and so on. Some of these roles lasted only for a single game or two; some included large scale map movement and the many engagements which constitute a campaign. Late in 1972 these roles were extended to include superheroes and wizards, as the special fantasy section of what was to become *Chainmail* was playtested. Magic-users defended their strongholds from invading armies, heroes met trolls, and magic items of great power were sought after on the same sand table which had formerly hosted Normans, Napoleonic footsoldiers, and trucks and tanks invading Normandy. These games were certainly adventures, and role-playing was involved, yet what was played could by no means be called either a D&D game or adventure gaming of any sort.

When Dave Arneson, already a member of the International Federation of Wargaming, joined the Castle & Crusade Society, he began playing in our loosely organized campaign game. Most of the action therein was conducted by the LGTSA, using my sand table, with other members of the society coming for visits to my place to join in from time to time. Dave had a large group in the Twin Cities, and they desired to do their own thing. Dave, an expert at running campaign games, began to develop his own "fief" as a setting for a medieval fantasy campaign gaming, reporting these games to the head of the C&C Society.

Using the *Chainmail* Fantasy Supplement and the "Man-To-Man" rules from the same work, Dave made some interesting innovations: First, he gave his fellows more or less individual roles to play — after all, "Blackmoor" was just a small section bordering on the "Great Kingdom," and there weren't all that many heroes and wizards and men-at-arms to parcel out. Then, Dave decided that he would allow progression of expertise for his players, success in games meaning that the hero would gain the ability of five, rather than but four men, eventually gaining the exalted status of superhero; similarly, wizards would gain more spells if they proved successful in their endeavors. Lastly, following the advice in *Chainmail* to use paper and pencil for underground activity such as mining during campaign-game sieges, and taking a page out of the works of Howard and Burroughs *et al*, he brought the focus of fantasy miniatures play to the dungeon setting.

Chainmail had proved to be highly successful primarily due to its pioneering steps in fantasy and individual gaming concepts — the tail end of the work which wagged the rest. Dave Arneson expanded upon these areas, and when he and I got together, the ideas necessary to create the D&D system were engendered. After a brief visit, Dave returned home, and within a few days I had received a copy of his campaign notes. A few weeks of playtesting swelled the ranks of the LGTSA to a score or more of avid players, and the form of the D&D rules began to take shape.

If you ever meet someone who claims to have played the game since 1973, you can believe that such is possible, for by the spring of that year the manuscript for the "Original" version of the D&D game was complete. Copies were handed out to interested players in order to stop the late-night and early-morning phone calls asking weird questions about clerics or monsters or whatever.

By the time the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game was published (January 1974) there were already hundreds of players, and the major parts of what was to become *Greyhawk* were written and in use too. Adventures, role playing, games, and fantasy all reach back into the dawn of history. Adventure gaming dates only to 1973-74 and the D&D concept. In 1974 only slightly more than 1,000 copies of the game had been sold. Today far more than that are sold each month. The game has many competitors, and every manufacturer of miniature figures offers a wide range of fantasy figures. Ads in gaming and hobby trade publications stress fantasy games and figures more often than any other subject. Adventure gaming has come a long way, and the D&D game began it all.

It is the leading adventure game, the most influential, and the most imitated. Since its inception it has been added to through special supplemental works (*Greyhawk, Blackmoor, Eldritch Wizardry*, and *Gods, Demi-Gods & Heroes*), augmented by miniatures rules (*Swords & Spells*), and complemented by a host of specially approved and licensed products from firms such as Judges Guild and Miniature Figurines. The original D&D rules have been edited (by the eminent J. Eric Holmes) to provide an introductory package, and the contents of that offering have recently been expanded to include a beginning module. Despite all of this activity, the game has remained pretty much as it was when it was first introduced in 1974, although there is now far more to it.

The ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules comprise a *different* game. Readers, please take note! It is neither an expansion nor a revision of the old game: *It is a new game*. A number of letters have come to me, the writers expressing their surprise at or voicing their disapproval of this fact. John Mansfield, in his newsletter *Signal*, cautions his readers to be aware

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that an ongoing D&D campaign cannot be switched to AD&D™ rules without major work or actual scrapping of the old game and beginning a fresh effort. To prevent any further misunderstandings, it is necessary for all fans of gaming to be absolutely aware that there is no more similarity (perhaps even less) between the D&D and AD&D games than there is between the D&D system and its various imitators produced by competing publishers.

Just as the D&D system was the instrument which made adventure gaming what it is today, it is envisioned that the AD&D system will shape the future of fantasy adventure gaming. Where the D&D rules are a very loose, open framework around which highly imaginative Dungeon Masters can construct what amounts to a set of rules and a game of their own choosing, the AD&D rules set forth a much tighter and more structured game system.

The target audience to which we thought the D&D rules would appeal was principally the same as that of historical wargames in general and military miniatures in particular. The original version of the D&D rules was hurriedly compiled, assuming that readers would be familiar with medieval and ancient history, wargaming, military miniatures, etc. It was aimed at males. Within a few months it became apparent to us that our basic assumptions might be a bit off target. In another year it became abundantly clear to us that we were so far off as to be laughable. At least we had the right subject material and the right general approach, so two out of three and all that...

Because the D&D system allowed such freedom, because the work itself said so, because the initial batch of DMs were so imaginative and creative, because the rules were incomplete, vague and often ambiguous, the D&D game has turned into a non-game. That is, there is so much variation between the way the game is played from region to region, state to state, area to area, and even from group to group within a metropolitan district, there is no continuity and little agreement as to just what the game is and how best to play it.

The AD&D system rectifies the shortcomings of the D&D system, without destroying the imagination and individual creativity which go into a campaign. There are few grey areas in the AD&D rules, and there will be no question in the mind of participants as to what the game is and is all about. There is form and structure to the AD&D game, and any variation of these integral portions of the game will obviously make it something else. The work addresses itself to a broad audience of hundreds of thousands of people — wargamers, game hobbyists, science-fiction and fantasy fans, those who have never read fantasy fiction or played strategy games, young and old, male and female.

The AD&D rules will eventually consist of the Dungeon Masters Guide, the Players Handbook, the Monster Manual, the DEITIES & DEMIGODS™ Cyclopedia, and undoubtedly one or two additional volumes of creatures with which to fill fantasy worlds. (*Editor's note: One such volume of creatures, the FIEND FOLIO™ Tome, was released in August 1981.*) These books, together with a broad range of modules and various playing aids, will provide enthusiasts with everything they need to create and maintain an enjoyable, exciting, fresh, and ever-challenging campaign. Readers are encouraged to differentiate their campaigns, calling them AD&D adventures if they are so. While D&D campaigns can be those which feature comic-book spells, 43rd-level balrogs as player characters, and include a plethora of trash from various and sundry sources, an AD&D campaign cannot be so composed. Either a DM runs an AD&D campaign, or else it is something else. This is clearly stated within the work, and it is a mandate which will be unchanging, even if the AD&D system undergoes change at some future date.

While DMs are free to allow many unique features to become a part of their campaigns — special magic items, new monsters, different spells, unusual settings — and while they can have free rein in devising the features and facts pertaining to the various planes which surround the Prime Material, it is understood they must adhere to the form of the AD&D rule structure. Otherwise, what they referee is a variant adventure game. In an AD&D game as well as in a D&D campaign, DMs still create an entire milieu, populate it and give it history and meaning. Players still develop personae and adventure in realms of the strange and fantastic, performing deeds of derring-do, but this all follows a master plan.

The advantages of such a game are obvious. Because the integral features are known and immutable, there can be no debate as to what is correct. A meaningful dialogue can be carried on between DMs, regardless of what region of the country (or the planet) they play in. Players can move from one AD&D campaign to another and know at the very least the basic precepts of the game — that magic-users will not wield swords, that fighters don't have instant death to give or take with critical hits or double damage, that strange classes of characters do not rule the campaign, that the various deities will not be constantly popping in and out of the game at the beck and call of player characters, etc. The AD&D system will suffer no such abuses, and DMs who allow them must realize this up front. The best feature of a game which offers real form, however, is that it will more readily lend itself to actual improvement — not just change, but true improvement. Once everyone is actually playing a game which is basically the same from campaign to campaign, any flaws or shortcomings of the basic systems and/or rules are lost due to the differences in play and the wide variety of solutions proposed — most of which reflect the propensities of local groups reacting to some variant system which their DM uses in his or her campaign in the first place. In AD&D activity, such aberrations will be excluded, and a broad base can be used to determine what is actually needed and desired.

Obtaining the opinions of the majority of AD&D players will be a difficult task. This is a certainty. If there are now more than a quarter million D&D and/or AD&D players (and this is likely a conservative estimate) less than 10% are actively in touch with the "hard core" of hobby gaming. Most of these players are only vaguely aware that Gary Gygax had anything to do with the D&D game. Only a relative handful read DRAGON™ magazine, and fewer still have any idea that there are other magazines which deal with the game. Frankly speaking, they don't care, either. They play D&D or AD&D games as leisure recreation. These are games to fill spare time, more or less avidly pursued according to the individual temperament of the individuals involved. To this majority, games are a diversion, not a way of life. A pastime, not something to be taken seriously.

The D&D game initiated a tradition of fun and enjoyment in hobby gaming. It was never meant to be taken seriously. The AD&D game is done in the same mold. It is not serious. It

''CHAINMAIL had proved to be highly successful primarily due to the pioneering steps in fantasy and individual gaming concepts ... Dave Arneson expanded upon these areas, and when he and I got together, the ideas necessary to create the D&D system were engendered.''

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June 1979

simulates absolutely nothing. It does not pretend to offer any realism. Games are for fun, and the AD&D system is a game. It certainly provides a vehicle which can be captivating, and a pastime in which one can easily become immersed, but is nonetheless **only a game**.

The bulk of participants echo this attitude. TSR will be hard put to obtain meaningful random survey data from these individuals simply because they are involved in playing the game, not in writing about it or reading about it outside the playing materials proper. There are, of course, a number of ways to surmount the problem, and you can count that steps will be taken to do so.

Conformity to a more rigid set of rules also provides a better platform from which to launch tournaments as well. Brian Blume recently established a regular invitational meet for AD&D "master players" (in which this writer placed a rather abysmal 10th out of 18 entries, but what the hell, it was good while it lasted). The "Invitational" will certainly grow, and TSR is now considering how best to establish an annual or semi-annual "Open" tournament for *AD&D* players to compete for enjoyment, considerable prize awards, recognition, and a chance to play in the "Masters" event. There is no reason not to expect these events, and/or others of similar nature sponsored by TSR, to grow and become truly exceptional opportunities in the years to come. Good things are certainly in store for AD&D players everywhere! Not only will AD&D retain its pre-eminent position in adventure gaming, but it will advance it considerably in the future. More variety, more approaches to play, more forms of the game, and more fun are in store.

The D&D game will always be with us, and that is a good thing. The D&D system allows the highly talented, individualistic, and imaginative hobbyist a vehicle for devising an adventure game form which is tailored to him or her and his or her group. One can take great liberties with the game and not be questioned. Likewise, the complicated and "realistic" imitators of the D&D system will always find a following amongst hobby gamers, for there will be those who seek to make adventure gaming a serious undertaking, a way of life, to which all of their thought and energy is directed with fanatical devotion.

At the same time, ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS gaming, with its clearer and easier approach, is bound to gain more support, for most people *play* games, not *live* them — and if they can live them while enjoying play, so much the better. This is, of course, what the AD&D game aims to provide. So far it seems we have done it.

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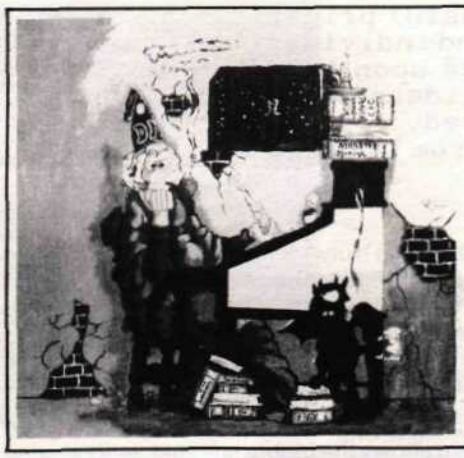


Evil: Law vs. chaos

AUG. 1979 #28

The AD&D™ Dungeon Masters Guide contains a fairly detailed section regarding the various alignment characteristics. On reflection, however, I began to wonder if enough had been said about the different approaches to *evil*. Now, if one clearly defines the *lawful evil* and the *chaotic evil* characteristics, the *neutral evil* path becomes evident as the middle road between the two opposite approaches to the precept of banefulness. Considering the confusion regarding alignments, it cannot but help to say a few more words on the subject.

Evil is typified by the desire to advance self over others, by whatever means are possible, and always by the foulest of means possible — and more on that later. Whatever causes the most harm is typically the most desirable course to follow. Pain and suffering are meat and drink to the creatures of evil. Slavery and oppression of all weaker creatures are considered as natural, for these exist only to serve and satisfy the demands of the stronger.

Lawful evil believes that the only way to impose the tyranny of their alignment over all creation is to follow an ordered course of action. Their evil society is rigidly structured, each being knowing its place and cruelly dominating all beneath this station, while being just as bullied from those above. Each creature in this hierarchy strives to follow the orders from the stronger most painstakingly — both to avoid punishment and in hopes of bettering its position in the order. To those beneath, each is as harsh and cruel as possible: fearful of failure in its tasks, of being replaced by an underling. The evil ends desired might be better obtained by actions which are actually less vile than other options, but the order of lawful evil will generally perceive the most useful course rather than merely the most baneful in the short term. Hell and its environs hate *chaotic good* most vehemently, for they see threats there to both the structure of their social system and their proposed course. What worse than both total freedom and happiness brought about only by individual achievement and character? Therefore, lawful evil would certainly not hesitate to ally itself with virtually any other cause if this helped to abridge the scope and influence of those creatures typifying the chaotic good. Similarly, a devil would attempt to influence and possess principally those humans who were powerful and influential leaders of ordered communities, organizations, and states, i.e. *lawful* individuals not already committed to evil ends.

Chaotic evil certainly has the common denominator of banefulness with those creatures who follow the ordered path of woe. They likewise oppress and enslave, torture and kill for the pure pleasure of seeing suffering and death. But while lawful evil sees these activities as part of the structured course towards a world ruled by evil, those of chaotic evil alignment see such activities as an end in themselves. While the weaker chaotic evil creatures fear and often hate the stronger, they are ruled by them only insofar as the reach of the stronger extends — and possibly only as long as the stronger has interest in so doing. The individual evil is more important than the collective one. Let each evil being do its best to spread evil and chaos, and the ultimate result will be a cancerous spread of the alignment. Order is next to good in undesirableness, so *lawful good* is the antithesis of chaotic evil. Yet creatures of this alignment will not long associate to combat their hated foes, except lesser creatures under the leadership of some mighty demon or in extreme situations where the very structure of chaotic evil is threatened by some great coalition of good. A demon is not interested in ruling nations, but in spreading evil as it alone sees fit. Therefore, possession by a creature of chaotic evil is typically of an unstable individual who will run amok for a short time, or of some singular figure who will be in a position to send out many such individuals.

The differences in tendencies and philosophies are reflected in the personal involvement of devils and demons in the affairs of the Prime Material Plane. The rulers of the Planes of Hell (devils) will seldom involve themselves in worldly affairs directly. Archdevils operate through their organizations to influence the course of events on the Prime Material Plane. Because of the strict order that devilkind adheres to, intervention of even lesser devils is rare, as the rulers make pacts with humans and other agents. These arrangements assure that lawful evil is spread upon the Prime Material Plane, even though the tiers of Hell are smaller than the layers of the Abyss, for example, and there are far fewer devils than there are demons. While there is rivalry betwixt the dukes of Hell, it is a prescribed and ordered contest wherein the rivals recognize limits and the need for mutual cooperation in order to insure that their collective realm remains strong and inviolate.

The very nature of demonkind, however, dictates a far more direct involvement in activities on the Prime Material Plane. Lacking extensive organizations, each demon lord must become personally active if he or she desires to meddle in the affairs of humankind, *et al*. It is not making a virtue of necessity on the part of demons to point out that they prefer such personal involvement. Thus, this or that demon lord will be encountered in material form, directing the activities of whatever group of followers he or she has gathered to spread disorder and woe upon the earth. Each powerful demon (and there are scores and scores of them) competes bitterly with all others in a deadly rivalry for supremacy — both in the Abyss and on the Prime Material Plane. The chaotic nature of demonkind dictates that mutual cooperation is unlikely at best, and any alliance between two demon lords will be one of mistrust and betrayal, doomed to a very short lifespan.

Neutral evil, as typified by daemonkind, follows the middle course between the rigidly ordered society of the Nine Hells and the anarchy of the Abyss. Yet this alignment has neither the organizational capability of lawful evil nor the great multitudes of chaotic evil, so all told it is weaker than either. The flexibility

of neutral evil creatures enables them to survive and remain relatively free of rule by either Hell or by one or more demon lords. The daemons and other inhabitants of Hades (and Gehenna and Tarterus as well) will as often as not become personally involved in activity on the Prime Material Plane if they see it as gainful to their power and prestige or particularly enjoyable. In like manner, they will join in diabolical or demonic enterprises to further their ends, both evil and personal.

Lawful evil has more common cause than those of lawful neutral bent than it does with demonkind, just as chaotic evil has more fellowship with chaotic neutrality than it does with Hell. Both chaotic evil and lawful evil types despise those who take the neutral course, seeing this as fence-straddling, so to speak. The demons are too disorganized to enslave these creatures, however, while Hell desires a buffer and uses daemonkind as tools as well. For their part, daemons play off the Abyss against lawful evil to insure their freedom, power, and continued importance.

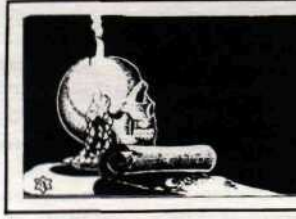
In summation, lawful evil, through its orderly arrangement and structure, wields great influence throughout the Prime Material Plane, even though devils seldom take a personal role, and the number of the dwellers in the Nine Hells is not overwhelming. Chaotic evil, on the other hand, while represented by a far greater number of powerful creatures taking a direct part in the affairs of the world, has no greater influence or power — perhaps less, even — because of animosity between demons and the chaotic tendencies which preclude organization and assurance of purposes carried out by lesser beings under direction. Hell works carefully to bring its evil yoke over all the world, while demonkind attempts only individual forays to aggrandize some lord or other, increase the fame and glory of a particular prince or princess of the Abyss, or merely to bring a few decades of foulest pleasure.

The lawful evil character, then, is bound to follow a course which is strictly ordered. The path he or she follows is one of evil, but also one which attempts to bring formal rule to the world under the auspices of Hell. The character must obey and strive for the purposes of lawful evil — furthering his or her own position in the process, of course. Those of you who have read Fred Saberhagen's *Changling Earth* will recognize that the Emperor John Ominor ruled a lawful evil realm — although he apparently served no diabolic master.

In contrast, the chaotic evil character serves only him or herself, but always toward evil ends. But the chaotic evil character recognizes no master, save out of fear and necessity, and even in the event that such recognition is necessary, he or she will always strive to gain the upper hand and dominate. If lawful evil can be likened to a mountain chain, with the highest peaks being the dukes of Hell and the lowest foothills the menial servants, then chaotic evil is a series of islands and islets in a vast sea — numerous, but connected only tenuously by underwater ridges.

The lawful evil character will certainly cooperate with others in order to extend the sway of his or her alignment — seeking advantage by lies, trickery, and deceit while adhering to the letter of the bargain, naturally. The chaotic evil character will rule but seldom cooperate for long. As soon as he or she sees a possible advantage accruing through abandonment or betrayal — or perhaps simply because he or she has grown tired of the pact — the chaotic evil character will be true to the precept of his or her alignment!

Players can assume the role of a good or an evil character without undue difficulty, but in my experience the orderly or disorderly tendencies are another matter altogether. Law and chaos seem to be more ingrained in the actual personality of a player, and these bents are thus not as easily acted out. While you, as DM, will order the NPCs of lawful, neutral, or chaotic evil alignment, your players will tend to assume alignments which actually fit their personalities as respects order vs. anarchy, so you must observe such activities quite closely. It is common for players to seek the best of both worlds by claiming the benefits of one alignment while using the processes of the other in order to gain power. Thus, a player might well claim to be lawful evil in order to receive the assistance of an archdevil, and thereafter blithely go about setting up a totally independent and free-wheeling empire of evil which has nothing to do with the aims of Hell. Such liberties cannot be allowed....



Humans and hybrids

SEPT. 1979 #29

Of late I have seen several different treatments of half-ogres, and the suggestion that this type of creature is a viable and worthwhile racial type for player characters has thus gained some small popularity. This subject also touches upon another, closely related, matter: the whole gamut of crossbreeds which could possibly be included in an AD&D™ game. Dungeon Masters must be apprised of the potential can of worms they will be opening by allowing these mixtures in their campaigns.

The character races in the AD&D system were selected with care. They give variety of approach, but any player selecting a non-human (part- or demi-human) charcter does not have any real advantage. True, some of these racial types give short-term advantages to the players who choose them, but in the long run these same characters are at an equal disadvantage when compared to human characters with the same number of experience points. This was, in fact, designed into the game. The variety of approach makes role selection more interesting. Players must weigh advantages and disadvantages carefully before opting for character race, human or otherwise. It is in vogue in some campaigns to remove restrictions on demi-humans — or to at least relax them somewhat. While this might make the DM popular for a time with those participants with dwarven fighters of high level, or elven wizards of vast power, it will eventually consign the campaign as a whole to one in which the only races will be non-human. Dwarves, elves, *et al* will have all the advantages and no real disadvantages, so the majority of players will select these races, and humankind will disappear from the realm of player character types. This bears upon various hybrid racial types as well.

In designing the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®

game, I considered the possible racial mixtures. Should half-dwarves, half-gnomes, and half-halflings (and is a half-halfling a quartling, perchance?) be allowed? How about dwarf-elf, dwarf-gnome, dwarf-halfling, elf-gnome, elf-halfling, and gnome-halfling cross-breeds? Then there are tri-racial mixtures. Those involving humans and orcs add still more confounding factors. And now somebody decided that ogres could cross with humans! Could they cross with elves also? How about hill giants interbreeding with humans? With elves? With ogres? With ettins? Why leave out goblins, hobgoblins, and bugbears?

Because of the potential for absolute madness in the game, I included only the half-elf, hoping that the rest would not arise to plague the placid waters of racial selection, but it is apparent that it was not meant to be.

Consider the various factors which must be taken into account when designing a race for *game purposes*. Remember that last part; this is, first and foremost, a game. Races, just as with classes, must be in relative balance with each other, as well as with the game as a whole. Setting this balance is a difficult and delicate operation! So we have 1) character class limits due to race; 2) level limits due to race; 3) ability adjustments due to race; 4) racial minimums and maximums in abilities; 5) racial preferences; and 6) special characteristics of racial types, i.e. magic resistance, saving throws, combat vs. specific monsters, visual and other sense capabilities, and "sixth-sense" or innate skill capabilities (such as detection of grades, and underground conditions, etc.). If these six factors are considered only as single entities, not as multifaceted ones, there is still plenty of work to do in setting up even a single additional character race, for each must be meshed with and balanced against all other such races. Now consider the possible cross-breeds, and multiply your DMing woes by a thousand! As surely as you allow a single player to select a non-standard hybrid, another will come along asking for some special crossbreed which he or she envisions to be "logical," meaningful, and fun to play (read "advantageous for the player in question"). Pixie-storm giant half-breeds would not be impossible.... (For those who doubt the last claim, consider a lecherous male pixie equipped with several growth potions and a love philter. And, when all is said and done, an AD&D game *is* fantasy.)

The Half-Ogre

Character classes possible: cleric or fighter

Class level limits: cleric, 4th; fighter, unlimited

Ability score minimums and maximums: Strength 14/18[1], Intelligence 3/12[2], Wisdom 2/12[3], Dexterity 3/12[4], Constitution 14/18[5], Charisma 2/8[6].

[1] Average human strength combined with ogre strength and averaged to find spread. Use d6, with a roll of 5 or 6 equaling 18, with a percentile bonus of 25% to the roll for exceptional strength if the first roll was 6, but an 18/00 maximum in any event.

[2] This spread could be lowered to a 10 maximum if the human parent was below norm.

[3] This spread could be lowered to a 10 maximum if the human parent was below norm.

[4] Again, this is generous, and a case could be made for 3-10 (d8 + 2).

[5] Constitution roll in excess of 18 is not possible, and if the d6 roll is 6, then treat it as the 18 maximum.

[6] Charisma score would not apply to ogres and half-ogres; double the result generated for the charismatic effect on such creatures.

Racial preferences: Half-orcs would rate a "T," humans an "N," and other half-ogres a "P." All others would be "H" both ways.

Special characteristics: Half-ogres have infravision to 60'. They speak ogre, orc and troll only if raised with an ogre parent. Complexion will be swarthy and dull, hair lank and dark. Average height will be 7½ feet. Half-ogres have two hit dice of the appropriate type at 1st level, then regular progression as usual.

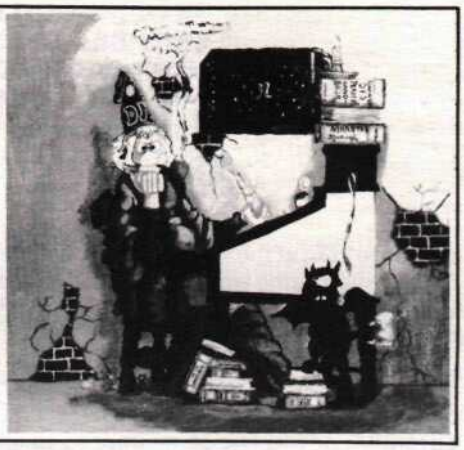
These quite reasonable parameters for half-ogre characters typify the offspring of a human and an ogre, were there such a thing as the latter, define their potential, and make it a race which will not disrupt the campaign. The only advantages accruing to half-ogres are in strength and constitution, and these are more than outweighed by disadvantages elsewhere. In fact, this race, when properly controlled, becomes a rather unappetizing and boring prospect for character play. On the other hand, such creatures would make highly desirable guards or mercenary troops — assuming one could abide their chaotic and evil bent — for they have many benefits and few drawbacks when compared with full-blooded ogres. For this reason alone, there will have to be strict limits placed upon the numbers of half-ogres available in the campaign.

It is important to reiterate that hybrids not shown in AD&D Players Handbook should be generally rejected in the well run campaign. The device is that of players seeking to gain some advantage for themselves by choosing a racial mixture which they believe will have greater advantages (with fewer drawbacks) than those of the character races given in the official AD&D rules.

If exceptions are to be made, be certain that you, the DM, consider each thoroughly prior to admitting it into the campaign milieu. Each exception must be detailed as was done for the half-ogre, above. Do so privately, and if after listing its parameters you find that the hybrid is unacceptable, disallow its use — or go back and restructure the characteristics, being careful to use the examples in the Players Handbook as a guide. Then, and only then, should a player be allowed to have such a hybrid racial type to choose from. Lastly, if thereafter many of your participants suddenly express a desire to start characters of this particular racial mixture, you can pretty well rely upon the fact that you blew it.

All of this will certainly lead to the question, why is it that the human race is so favored in the AD&D rule system? There is no question that human characters have an edge on all others in the long run — even considering the generally unlimited potential for non-human thieves. The bias was placed in the game on the assumption that the vast majority of campaign milieux would be based on human-dominated worlds. Therefore, humans must have some sort of edge. As human adaptability is undoubted, and human capabilities deemed vast by this writer, it seemed to follow that allowing them the full range of possibilities was the best answer. Thus, humans are found in all alignments, in all professions, and so on. The weakest are very weak, the strongest very strong. The human race plumbs the depths and soars to the heights. In the AD&D world, as in the real world, humankind will certainly attain greatness and domination if it doesn't destroy itself first through warfare and strife within its own race.

Books are books, Games are games



NOV. 1979 #31

Heroic fantasy adventure novels relate a story for the reader's leisure enjoyment. Heroic fantasy adventure games provide a vehicle for the user's creation and development of epic tales through the medium of play. This simple difference is too often overlooked.

In the former case, the reader *passively* relates to what the author has written, hopefully identifying with one or the other of the novel's leading characters, thus becoming immersed in the work and accepting it as real for the time.

Games, however, involve participants *actively*; and in the instance of fantasy adventure games, the player must create and develop a game persona which becomes the sole vehicle through which the individual can relate to the work.

Again, in the novel, the entire advantage related is a matter of fact which the reader will discover by perusal of the story from beginning to conclusion, without benefit of input. In contrast, the adventure game has only a vaguely fixed starting point, and the participant must, in effect, have a hand in authoring an unknown number of chapters in an epic work of heroic fantasy.

A novel has an entirely different goal than does a game, although both are forms of entertainment. The novel carries the reader from start to finish, while the game must be carried by the players.

An heroic fantasy adventure story should be so complete as to offer little within its content for reader creativity, or else it is an unfinished tale. This is not to say that the reader cannot become involved in the telling, that there is no rapport between writer and reader, or even that the whole milieu produced by the work isn't vividly alive in the reader's mind. It simply is to point out that the *author* has conceived a fantasy, placed it in black and white before the reader, and invited him or her to share it.

A fantasy adventure game should offer little else but the possibility of imaginative input from the participant, for the aim of any game is to involve the participants in active play, while heroic fantasy adventure dictates imagination, creativity, and more.

The obvious corollary to this — and one evidently missed by many players, designers, and even publishers — is that a truly excellent novel provides an inversely proportionate amount of good material for a game. The greater the detail and believability of the fantasy, the less room for creativity, speculation, or even alteration.

Consider J.R.R. Tolkien's "Ring Trilogy" for a moment. This is certainly a masterwork in heroic fantasy — with emphasis on fantasy. Its detail is vast. Readers readily identify with the protagonists, whether hobbit, human, or elf. Despite the fact that the whole tale seems to vouch for the reliability of the plain and simple "little guy" in doing a dirty job right, despite the fact that these books could very well deal allegorically with the struggle of the Allies vs. the Axis in WWII, despite the fact that the looming menace of the Tyrannical Evil simply blows away into nothing in the end, millions of readers find it the epitome of the perfect heroic fantasy adventure.

There are no divine powers to intervene on behalf of a humanity faced by ineffable evil. The demi-god being, Tom Bombadil, is written out of the tale because his intervention would have obviated the need for the bulk of the remaining work. The wizards are basically mysterious and rather impotent figures who offer cryptic advice, occasionally do something useful, but by and large are offstage doing "important business" or "wicked plotting."

Thus, the backbone of the whole is the struggles of a handful of hobbits, elves, humans, and dwarves against a backdrop of human armies and hordes of evil orcs. Irrespective of its merits as a literary classic (and there is no denying that it is a beautifully written tale), the "Ring Trilogy" is quite unsatisfactory as a setting for a fantasy adventure game.

If the basis for such a game is drawn straight from the three novels, then there is no real game at all — merely an endless repetition, with a few possible variations, of the "Fellowship" defeating Sauron *et al*. As soon as the potential for evil to triumph is postulated by the game, several problems arise: First, most dedicated readers, identifying with the heroic elements of the work, do not desire to play the despised forces of Saruman or Sauron. The greater chance to win that evil has, the greater the overall antipathy for playing the game at all. Tolkien purists will also object to a distortion of the story.

Finally, even if the whole is carefully balanced, the best one can come up with is a series of variations on the "Ring Trilogy," whether the re-enactment is a role-playing game or a board game. The roles are cast by Tolkien, the world is structured according to his wants and desires. The more the game is put into this framework, the less of J.R.R.T. the participants will discover.

In similar fashion, imagine a game based on the exploits of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's magnificent sleuth Sherlock Holmes. Which of the participants wouldn't like to play the role of the great

"... imagine a game based on the exploits of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's magnificent Sherlock Holmes. Which of the participants wouldn't wish for the role of the great detective? ... what would the participants do if Holmes were slain? Or merely made a fool of"

From issue #31
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detective? Or, at the very least, Dr. Watson? The subject matter for any such game would be particularly difficult to handle, and what would the participants do if Holmes were slain? Or merely made a fool of, for that matter?

These two examples of extrapolating a game from fiction are given only to illustrate the point about the major differences between what makes a good game and what makes a good adventure novel. The same applies to all works of fiction to a greater or lesser extent.

Delving further into the matter, we next come to the character in the adventure. In heroic fantasy novels, each character is designed to fit into the tale being told, for whatever ends the author desires. Each such character is interwoven to form the plot fabric of the work.

Such characters make for great reading, but as absolute models for games? Never! What AD&D™ player would find it interesting to play a wizard figure of Gandalf-like proportions? What DM would allow a Conan into his or her campaign?

The object of the character in the fantasy adventure game is to provide the player with a means of interacting with the scenario, a vehicle by which the participant can engage in game activity. Each gaming character must provide interest for the participant through its potential, its unique approaches to the challenges of the game form, and yet be roughly equal to all other characters of similar level.

While novels fix character roles to suit a preordained conclusion, game personae must be designed with sufficient flexibility so as to allow for participant personality differences and multiple unknown situations.

Were a designer to offer a game form in which all participants were fighters of Conan's ilk, participants might find it interesting at first but then the lack of challenge and objective would certainly make the game pall. If the design were then amended to allow for titanic forces to actually threaten a fighter of Conan's stature, the game merely becomes one where participants start at the top and work upwards from there.

This approach seems quite unacceptable to my way of thinking, and not necessary because it could have begun on a far more reasonable and believable level. The same logic applies to designs which feature any type of character as super-powerful. They are usually developed by individuals who do not grasp the finer points of game design, or they are thrust forward by participants who envision such characters as a vehicle to allow them to dominate an existing game form.

Were fighters to be given free rein of magic items in an AD&D game, and spells relegated to a potency typical of most heroic fantasy novels, for example, then the vast majority of participants would desire to have fighter characters. This would certainly lessen the scope of the game.

If a spell-point system which allowed magic-users to use any spell on the lists (and use them frequently, for what spell-point system doesn't allow for rapid restoration of points?), these characters become highly dominant, and again most participants will naturally opt for this role.

Were clerics to be given use of all weapons and more offensive spells, the rush would be for priest characters.

Were thieves assumed to be more brigand and less of a sneak-thief, pickpocket character, so that they fought as fighters and possibly wore armor, then the majority of players would desire thief characters.

The point is, each AD&D character has strengths and weaknesses which make any chosen profession less than perfect. Choose one, and you must give up the major parts of the other approaches. Each character has different and unique aspects. Playing the game with the different classes of characters offers a fresh approach, even if the basic problems are not dissimilar. The diversity of roles, without undue inequality, is what makes any game interesting and fun to play.

In a novel, diversity is a tool for the author to use in developing the protagonist's character, for highlighting the magnitude of his or her accomplishments, as a contrast between good and evil, or whatever is needed. A novel can easily have a magic-using fighter, a sword-wielding wizard, or a thief who combines all such aspects.

The work can just as well have the antithesis of such characters — the inept swordsman; the bumbling, lack-power magician; the hopeless thief who never gains a copper. The writer knows his or her aims, and such personae are actors who follow their roles to the desired end.

Contrary to this, in the fantasy role-playing game, characters are the principal authors of the adventure epic which is developed by means of the rules, the Dungeon Master's scripting, and the players' interaction with these and each other. With characters of too much or little power, the story rapidly becomes a farce or a tragedy!

By all means, do not discard heroic fantasy novels as useless to gaming. They are, in fact, of utmost benefit! If the basis of the game is a setting which allows maximum imaginative input from players, and characters' roles are both unique and viable (as well as relatively balanced as compared to one another), ideas for these areas and for all the structure and "dressing" are inspired from such fictional works.

With appropriate knowledge of what can only be called primary source material as regards heroic fantasy (the classic mythology works of Europe, *et al*), these novels not only engender fresh ideas, they also point the designer or DM toward other areas. After all, the authors of such works often have considerable knowledge of subject matter ideal for use in heroic fantasy adventure gaming. Tolkien drew heavily upon British myth, the Norse sagas and Eddas, and even the word *ent* is from the Saxon tongue, meaning giant.

There is certainly much to be learned from scholarly writers, and they can often point the reader toward the source material they used. As a case in point, L. Sprague de Camp and Fletcher Pratt cite *Faerie Queen* and *Orlando Furioso* as sources for parts of *The Incomplete Enchanter* and *The Castle of Iron*. The latter stories are exceptionally fine examples of heroic fantasy adventure. The former works are excellent inspirational sources.

The "G Series" modules (*Steading of the Hill Giant Chief, Glacial Rift of the Frost Giant Jarl,* and *Hall of the Fire Giant King*) were certainly inspired by de Camp and Pratt's *The Incomplete Enchanter*. The three "D Series" modules which continue the former series owe little, if anything, to fiction. Drow are mentioned in Keightley's *The Fairy Mythology*, as I recall (it might have been *The Secret Commonwealth* — neither book is before me, and it is not all that important anyway), and as Dark Elves of evil nature, they served as an ideal basis for the creation of a unique new mythos designed especially for the AD&D game. The roles the various drow are designed to play in the series are commensurate with those of prospective player characters. In fact, the race could be used for player characters, providing that appropriate penalties were levied when a drow or half-drow was in the daylight world.

The sketchy story line behind the series was written with the game in mind, so rules and roles were balanced to suit the AD&D system. It is not difficult to write a tale based on AD&D characters, but it is difficult to try to fit regular characters from an heroic fantasy novel into the AD&D mold. There are exceptions.

Individual characters from myth or authored mythos can be used as special characters of the non-player sort (monsters, if you will) for inclusion in scenarios. Most such characters can be altered to fit into the AD&D structure — or rules can be bent in order to allow for them as an exceptional case — in order to make the campaign more interesting and exciting.

That is not to say that they can be used as role models for character types in the game — that Melniboneans, for example, are suitable as player characters just because Elric is inserted into a scenario. This sort of thinking quickly narrows the scope of the game to one or two combination-profession character types with virtually unlimited powers and potential, and there goes the game!

So when you are tempted to allow character additions or alterations which cite this or that work as a basis for the exception, consider the ultimate effect such deviation will have on the campaign, both immediate and long-term.

Keep roles from novels in their proper place — either as enjoyable reading or as special insertions of the non-player sort. The fact that thus-and-so magic-user in a fantasy yarn always employs a magic sword, or that the Gray Mouser, a thief, is a commensurate bladesman, has absolutely nothing to do with the balance between character classes in the AD&D system.

Clerics, fighter, magic-users, thieves, *et al* are purposely designed to have strengths and weaknesses which give each profession a unique approach to solving the problems posed by the game. Strengthening one by alteration or addition actually abridges the others and narrows the scope of your campaign.

Make-believe magic

JAN. 1980 #33

Working up rules about make-believe can be difficult. Magic, at least AD&D™ magic, is most certainly make-believe. If there are "black arts" and "occult sciences" which deal with real, working magic spells, I have yet to see them.

Mildly put, I do not have any faith in the powers of magic, nor have I ever seen anyone who could perform anything approaching a mere *first-level* AD&D spell without props. Yet heroic fantasy has long been one of my favorite subjects, and while I do not believe in invincible superheroes, wicked magicians, fire-breathing dragons, and the stuff of fairie, I love it all nonetheless! Being able to not only read about heroic adventures of this sort, but also to play them as a game form, increased the prospects of this enjoyment of imaginary worlds. So magic and dragons and superheroes and all such things were added to *Chainmail*.

Simply desiring to play fantasy-based games does not bring them into being as a usable product. Most of the subject matter dealt with has only a limited range of treatment. Thus, giants are always written of as large and not overly bright, save in classical mythology, of course. Some are larger than others, and some are turned to stone by sunlight, and so on, but the basics were there to draw from, and no real problems were posed in selecting characteristics for such creatures in a game. The same is basically true for many monsters and even adventurers — heroes, magic-users, *et al*. Not so with magic. There are nearly as many treatments of magic as there are books which deal with it. What approach to take? In *Chainmail*, this was not a particularly difficult decision. The wizard using the magic was simply a part of an overall scheme, so the spells just *worked*: As a catapult hurled boulders, so a wizard threw fire balls or lightning bolts; elves could move invisibly, split-move and fire bows, and engage monsters if armed with magical weapons, while wizards could become invisible or cast spells.

When it came time to translate the cut-and-dried stuff of the *Chainmail* Fantasy Supplement to the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules, far more selection and flexibility had to be delivered, for the latter game was free-form. This required me to back up several steps to a point where the figure began a career which would eventually bring him or her to the state where they would equal (and eventually exceed) a *Chainmail* wizard. Similarly, some basis for the use of magic had to be created so that a system of spell acquisition could be devised. Where should the magic power come from? Literature gave many possible answers, but most were unsuitable for a game, for they demanded that the spell-caster spend an inordinate amount of time preparing the spell. No viable adventurer character could be devised where a week or two of preliminary steps were demanded for the conjuration of some not particularly mighty spell. On the other hand, spell-casters could not be given license to broadcast magic whenever and wherever they chose.

This left me with two major areas to select from. The *internal power*, or *manna*, system where each spell-caster uses energy from within to effect magic, requires assigning a total point value to each such character's manna, and a cost in points to each spell. It is tedious to keep track of, difficult to police, and allows magic-users far too much freedom where a broad range of spells are given. If spell points were to be used, it would require that either selection be limited or all other characters and monsters be strengthened. Otherwise, spell-users would quickly come to dominate the game, and participants would desire to play only that class of character. (As a point of reference, readers are referred to the handling of psionic abilities as originally treated in *Eldritch Wizardry*. Therein, psionic manna was assumed, the internal

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From issue #33
January 1980

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power usable to tap external sources, and the range of possible powers thus usable was sharply limited.)

Having read widely in the fantasy genre since 1950, I opted instead for the oft-used system which assumes that magic comes from power locked within certain words and phrases which are uttered to release the force. This *mnemonic power* system was exceedingly well articulated by Jack Vance in his superb novels *The Eyes of The Overworld* and *Dying Earth*, as well as in various short stories. In memorizing the magical words, the brain of the would-be spell-caster is taxed by the charged force of these syllables. To increase capacity, the spell-caster must undergo training, study, and mental discipline.

This is not to say that he or she ever understands the words, but the capacity to hold them in the memory and to speak them correctly increases thus. The magic words, in turn, trigger energy which causes the spell to work.

The so-called "Vancian" magic system allows a vast array of spells. Each is assigned a level (mnemonic difficulty) rating, and experience grades are used to expand the capacity of the spell-caster. The use of this particular system allows more restrictions upon spell-casting character types, of course, while allowing freedom to assign certain spells to lower difficulty factors to keep the character type viable in its early stages. It also has the distinct advantages of requiring that spell-users select their magic prior to knowing what they must face, and limiting bookkeeping to a simple list of spells which are crossed off as expended.

The mnemonic spell system can be explained briefly thus: Magic works because certain key words and phrases (sounds) unlock energy from elsewhere. The sounds are inscribed in arcane texts or religious works available to spell-users. Only training and practice will allow increased memory capacity, thus allowing more spells to be used. Once uttered, the sounds discharge their power, and this discharge not only unlocks energy from elsewhere, but it also wipes all memory of the particular words or phrases from the speaker's brain. Finally, the energy manifested by the speaking of the sounds will take a set form, depending on the pronunciation and order of the sounds. So a *Sleep* spell or a *Charm Monster* spell is uttered and the magic effected, the mind is wiped clean of the memory of what the sounds were, but by careful concentration and study later, the caster can again memorize these keys.

When the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game system was in the conceptual stage, I realized that while the "Vancian" system was the best approach to spell-casting in fantasy adventure games, the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS system did not go far enough in defining, delineating, and restricting its use. Merely having words was insufficient, so elements of other systems would have to be added to make a better system. While it could be similar in concept to D&D® spell-casting, it had to be quite different in all aspects, including practice, in order to bring it up to a higher level of believability and playability with respect to other classes.

The AD&D magic system was therefore predicated on the concept that there were three power-trigger keys — the cryptic utterances, hypnotic gestures, and special substances — the *verbal, somatic*, and *material* components, possible in various combinations, which are needed to effect magic. This aspect is less "Vancian," if you will, but at the same time the system overall is more so, for reasons you will see later.

Verbal spell components, the energy-charged special words and phrases, are necessary in most spells. These special sounds are not general knowledge, and each would-be spell-caster must study in order to even begin to comprehend their reading, meaning, and pronunciation, i.e., undergo an apprenticeship. The basic assumption of this training is the ability to actually handle such matter; this ability is expressed in intelligence or wisdom minimums for each appropriate spell-using profession.

Somatic spell components, the ritual gestures which also draw the power, must also be learned and practiced. This manual skill is less important in clericism, where touching or the use of a holy/unholy symbol is generally all that is involved, while in the illusionist class it is of great importance, as much of the spell power is connected with redirection of mental energy.

Material components are also generally needed. This expansion into sympathetic magic follows the magic portrayed by L. Sprague de Camp and Fletcher Pratt in their superb "Harold Shea" stories, for example. Of course, it is a basic part of primitive magic systems practiced by mankind. In general, some certain material or materials are also needed to complete the flow of power from the spell-caster, which in turn will draw energy from some other place and cause the spell to happen.

In order to obtain greater spell capabilities, the spell-caster must do considerable studying, and he or she must also have source material to study. The AD&D system assumes that such material is hard to come by, and even if a spell-casterr is capable of knowing/memorizing many and high-level spells, he or she must find them (in the case of magic-users and illusionists) or have the aid of deities or minions thereof (in the situation faced by clerics and druids). These strictures apply to other professions which are empowered with spell use, as appropriate to the type of spells in question. In order to expand mnemonic capacity, spell-users must do further study and be trained. Thus, the system is in some ways more "Vancian," as such information and studies are indicated, if not necessarily detailed, in the works of that author. It might also be said that the system takes on "Lovecraftian" overtones, harkening to tomes of arcane and dread lore.

In addition to the strictures on locating the information for new spells, and the acquisition of the ability to cast (new, more powerful) spells, the requirements of verbal, somatic, and material components in most spell-casting highlight the following facts regarding the interruption and spoiling of spells: Silencing the caster will generally ruin the spell or prevent its instigation. Any interruption of the somatic gestures — such as is accomplished by a successful blow, grappling, overbearing, or even severe jostling — likewise spoils the magic. Lack of material components, or the alteration or spoiling thereof, will similarly cause the spell to come to naught.

Of course, this assumes the spell has the appropriate verbal, somatic, or material components. Some few spells have only a verbal component, fewer still only verbal and material components, a handful only somatic and material, and just one has a somatic component alone. (Which fact will most certainly change if I ever have the opportunity to add to the list of illusionists' spells, for on reflection, I am convinced that this class should have more spells of somatic component only—but that's another story.)

All of these triggers mean that it is both more difficult to cast a spell, especially when the new casting-time restrictions are taken into account, and easier to interrupt a spell before it is successfully cast.

Consider the casting of a typical spell with V, S, and M

components. When the caster has opportunity and the desire to cast a spell, he or she must utter the special energy-charged sound patterns attendant to the magic, gesture appropriately, and hold or discard the material component(s) as necessary to finally effect the spell. Ignoring the appropriate part or parts, all spells are cast thus, the time of conjuration to effect the dweomer varying from but a single segment to many minutes or tens of minutes. These combinations allow a more believable magic system, albeit the requirements placed upon spell-casters are more stringent, and even that helps greatly to balance play from profession to profession.

A part and parcel of the AD&D magic system is the general classification of each spell by its effect. That is, whether the spell causes an *alteration*, is a *conjuration/summoning*, *enchantment/charm*, etc. This grouping enables ease of adjudication of changes of spell effects or negation of power. It also makes it easier to classify new spells by using the grouping.

It seems inevitable that the classification and component functions will eventually lead to further extrapolation. The energy triggers of sound and motion will be categorized and defined in relation to the class of dweomer to be effected. This will indicate from whence the magic actually comes, i.e., from what location or plane of existence the end result of a successfully cast spell actually comes. Perhaps this will lead to a spell-casting character having to actually speak a rime, in addition (perhaps) to indicating what special movements are to be made, and how material components are to be used. While this is not seriously proposed for the play of a "normal" game, the wherewithal to do so will probably be available to DMs whose participants are so inclined.

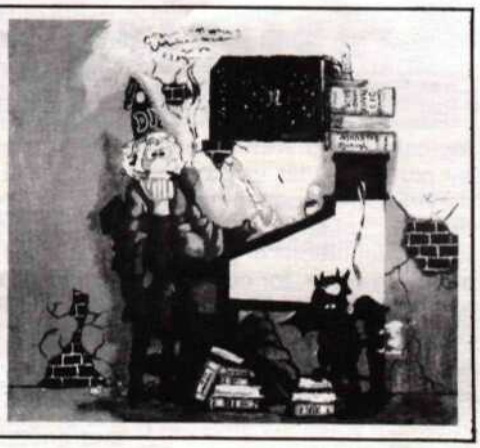
It all has a more important and useful purpose, however. Defining the energy triggers will make it possible to matrix combinations by class of spell-caster and dweomer group. Mispronounced spells, or research into new spells, will become far more interesting in many ways if and when such information is available and put into use!

As it now stands, the AD&D magic system is a combination of reputed magic drawn from works of fiction and from myth. Although they are not defined, verbal and somatic components are necessary energy-triggers. The memorization of these special sounds and motions is difficult, and when they are properly used, they release their small stores of energy to trigger power from elsewhere. This release totally wipes all memory of sound and/or motion from the memory of the spell caster, but it does not otherwise seriously affect his or her brain — although the mnemonic exercise of learning them in the first place is unquestionably taxing. Duplicates of the same spell can be remembered also, but the cast spell is gone until its source is again carefully perused.

The new form which spell casting has taken in the AD&D game has a more realistic flavor to it — unimportant, but some players revel in this sort of thing, and that is well enough. Of real importance, however, is the fact that it requires far more effort from spell-casters in gaining, preparing, and casting spells. It makes them more vulnerable to attacks which spoil the casting of the spell. All in all, it tends to make each and every profession possible for characters in an AD&D game to be more equal to, but still very different from, all of the others. Lastly, it opens up new areas where new development can be done at some future time, and if such new material adds significantly to the enjoyment of the game, it will certainly be published — perhaps first in experimental form herein, then possibly in final form in a revised edition of the work itself.

If the foregoing doesn't completely explain everything you or your players wish to know about the AD&D magic system; if after all of those words there are still unanswered questions, doubt, or disputes, remember the last and overriding principle of the whole: *It's magic!*

Good isn't stupid: Paladins & rangers



JUNE 1980 #38

There seems to be a continuing misunderstanding amongst a segment of ADVANCED D&D® players as to what the term "good" actually means. This problem does cut both ways, of course, for if good is not clearly defined, how can evil be known? Moral and ethical precepts are based on religious doctrines, secular laws, family teachings, and individual perceptions of these combined tenets. It might be disturbing if one reflected deeply upon the whys and wherefores of the singular inability of so many players to determine for themselves the rights and wrongs of good behavior — unless one related this inability to the fact that the game is fantasy and therefore realized (rationalized?) that this curious lack must stem from the inability to draw a parallel between daily life and the imagined milieu. In order to clear the record immediately, then, and define the term "good" for all participants, it means everything defined in the dictionary as augmented and modified by one's moral and ethical upbringing and the laws of the land!

Gentle Reader, if you are in doubt about a certain action —and this applies particularly to all who play rangers and paladins — relate it to your real life. It is most probable that what is considered "good" in reality can be "good" in fantasy. The reverse is not quite so true, so I'll quantify things a bit.

Good does *not* mean stupid, even if your DM tries to force that concept upon you. Such assertions are themselves asinine, and those who accept such dictates *are* stupid. To quantify "good," however, we must also consider the three modifiers in the AD&D™ alignment system: 1) *lawful*; 2) *neutral*; and 3) *chaotic*.

1) The *lawful* perception of good dictates that the order

which promotes the greatest good for the greatest number is best. It further postulates that disorder brings results which erode the capability of bestowing good to the majority. Therefore, without law and order, good pales into nothingness.

2) Good from the *neutral* perception is perhaps the purest sort, in that it cares not for order or individual freedom above overall good, so there are no constraints upon the definition of what is good. Whatever accomplishes the good result is acceptable, and the means used should not be so fixed as to bring bad to any creature if an alternative way exists which accomplishes the desired good without bringing ill to others — or better still, brings good to all in one degree or another.

3) The *chaotic* views good from an individual standpoint, of necessity. The very stuff of chaos is individual volition, freedom from all constraints, the right of person above all else. Good is first and foremost applied to self; thereafter to those surrounding self; lastly to those furthest removed from self — a ripple effect, if you will. It is important to understand that "good" for self must not mean "bad" for others, although the "good" for self might not bring like benefits to others — or any benefit at all, for that matter. However, the latter case is justifiable as "good" only if it enables the individual to be in a better position to bring real "good" to others within the foreseeable future.

One of the advantages of the AD&D environment over the real world is that we do have pretty clear definitions of good and evil — if not conceptually (as is evident from the necessity of this article), at least nominally. Characters and monsters alike bear handy labels to allow for easy identification of their moral and ethical standing. Black is black, gray is gray, white is white. There are intensities of black, degrees of grayness, and shades of white, but the big tags are there to read nonetheless.

The final arbiter in any campaign is the DM, the person who figuratively puts in the fine print on these alignment labels, but he or she *must* follow the general outlines of the rule book or else face the fact that his or her campaign is not an AD&D campaign. Furthermore, participants in such a campaign can cease playing. That is the surest and most vocal manner in which to demonstrate displeasure with the conduct of a referee. In effect, the labels and their general meanings are defined in the AD&D rules, and the details must be scribed by the *group* participating.

Perceptions of good vary according to age, culture, and theological training. A child sees no good in punishment meted out by parents — let us say for playing with matches. Cultural definitions of good might call for a loud belch after eating, or the killing of any person who performs some taboo act. Theological definitions of good are as varied as cultural definitions, and then some, for culture is affected by and affects religion, and there are more distinct religious beliefs than there are distinct cultures. It is impossible, then, for one work to be absolute in its delineation of good and evil, law and chaos, and the middle ground between (if such can exist in reality). This does not, however, mean that "good" can be anything desired, and anyone who tells you, in effect, that good means stupid, deserves a derisive jeer (at least).

The *Sage Advice* column in issue #36 of DRAGON™ magazine (April 1980) contained some interesting questions and answers regarding "good" as related to paladins and rangers. Let us examine these in light of the foregoing:

A player with a paladin character asked if this character could "put someone to death (who) is severely scarred and doesn't want to live." Although the reply given in *Sage Advice* was a strong negative, it is suggested here that the actual truth of the matter *might* lie somewhere else. The player does not give the name of the deity served by the paladin. This is the key to lawful good behavior in AD&D terms. Remember that "good" can be related to reality often, but not always. It might also relate to good as perceived in the past, actual or mythical. In the latter case, a paladin could well force conversion at swordpoint, and, once acceptance of "the true way" was expressed, dispatch the new convert on the spot. This assures that the prodigal will not return to the former evil ways, sends the now-saved spirit on to a *better* place, and incidentally rids the world of a potential troublemaker. Such actions are "good," in these ways:

1. Evil is abridged (by at least one creature).
2. Good has gained a convert.
3. The convert now has hope for rewards (rather than torment) in the afterlife.
4. The good populace is safer (by a factor of at least 1).

It is therefore possible for a paladin to, in fact, actually perform a "mercy killing" such as the inquiring player asked about, provided the tenets of his or her theology permitted it. While unlikely, it is possible.

Another case in point was that of a player with a paladin character who wishes to marry and begin a lineage. Again, our *Sage Advice* suggests a negative. While many religions forbid wedlock and demand celibacy, this is by no means universal. The key is again the deity served, of course. DMs not using particular, specific deities will harken back to the origin of the term "paladin" and realize that celibacy is not a condition of that sort of paladinhood. Also, although the Roman Catholic church demands celibacy of its priests, the doctrines of Judeo-Christianity hold matrimony and the bearing and rearing of children as holy and proper, i.e. "good." So unless a particular deity demands celibacy of its fighter-minions, there is no conceivable reason for a paladin not to marry and raise children. This is a matter for common sense — and the DM, who, if he or she is not arbitrary, will probably agree with the spirit of the game and allow marriage and children. (This must be a long-range campaign, or else its participants are preoccupied with unusual aspects of the game. No matter....)

The third inquiry concerned a ranger character. The writer claimed that his or her DM combined with a lawful good ranger to insist that a wounded wyvern was to be protected, not slain, unless it attacked the party. Here is a classic case of players being told that (lawful) good equates with stupidity. To assert that a man-killing monster with evil tendencies should be protected by a lawful good ranger is pure insanity. How many lives does this risk immediately? How many victims are condemned to death later? In short, this is not "good" by any accepted standards! It is much the same as sparing a rabid dog or a rogue elephant or a man-eating tiger.

If good is carefully considered, compared to and contrasted with evil, then common sense will enable most, if not all, questions regarding the behavior of paladins and rangers to be settled on the spot. Consideration of the character's deity is of principal merit after arriving at an understanding of good. Thereafter, campaign "world" moral and ethical teachings on a cultural basis must rule. These concepts might be drawn from myth or some other source. What matters is that a definition of "good" is established upon intelligent and reasonable grounds. Viewpoints do differ, so absolutes (especially in a *game*) are both undesirable and impossible.

III. Monsters and miscellany

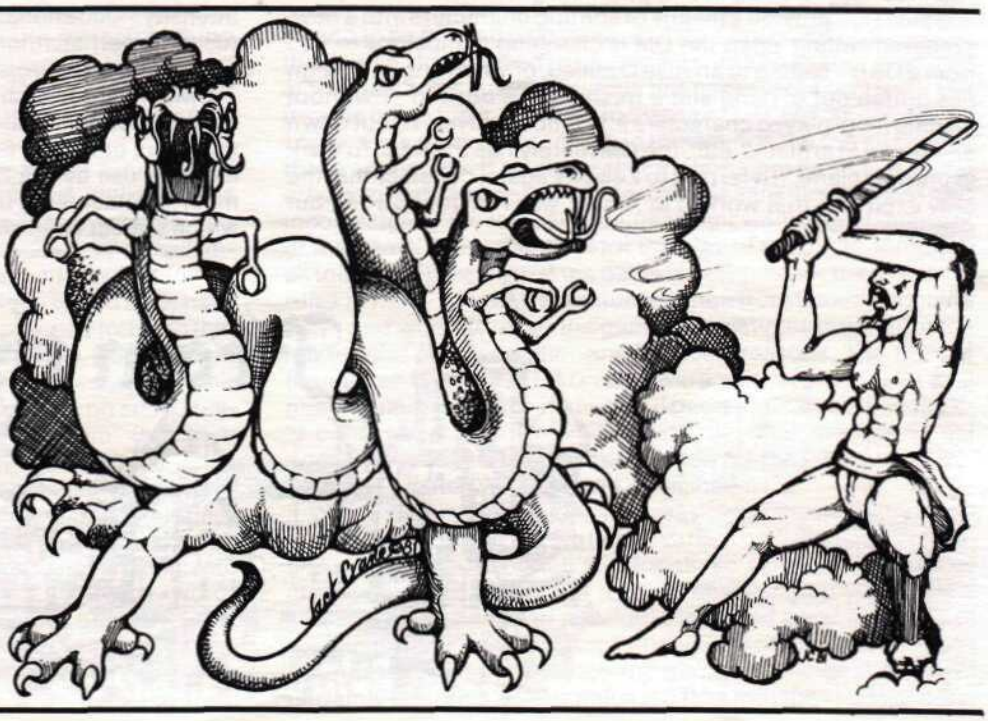
There's almost no way to put together a volume of reprints without resorting to a "miscellaneous" section for all the subjects that don't fall under some other heading. And that's okay, as long as we don't inadvertently give you the impression that "miscellaneous" means "insignificant." This introduction is designed to keep that from happening.

Contained in this section are articles that represented significant advances in the art of fantasy adventure gaming when they were published, and which have retained their usefulness and importance over the years.

Some of them offer more detail on traditionally popular monsters — the lich, the vampire, the lycanthropes — providing obvious opportunities for expansion and variety in any campaign which uses those creepy creatures. (And what campaign doesn't?)

Other articles offer examples of how to apply to an AD&D™ campaign concepts and procedures that are only marginally covered in the rules, such as the description of how to set up inns and taverns, and the discussion on interplanar gates which draws heavily upon examples from fantasy literature. And check out the articles on tesseracts, the way to literally add a new dimension to your gaming.

Various villains, variants and environments, in words — and pictures



MAY 1980 : #37

Theory and use of gates

by Ed Greenwood

Elric looked at the pit. It was ragged and deep and the earth in it seemed freshly turned as if it had been but lately dug.

"What must we wait for, Friend Corum?"

"For the Tower," said Prince Corum. "I would guess that this is where it appears when it is in this plane."

"And when will it appear?"

"At no particular time. We must wait. And then, as soon as we see it, we must rush it and attempt to enter before it vanishes again, moving on to the next plane."

— Michael Moorcock,
The Vanishing Tower

The plane-shifting Vanishing Tower of Moorcock's Eternal Champion series is only one of the many fascinating means of travelling between worlds found in SF and fantasy literature. These "gates" (as they are most often called) are ideal for use in AD&D™ campaigns, serving as means of moving between various known planes of existence.

Besides providing a means of taking players into new areas or settings (often regardless of their wishes), gates have the added advantage of allowing the DM to introduce NPCs not otherwise consistent with his or her world, by providing a plausible way of getting them there.

Thus, characters from other campaigns or figures famed in fantastic literature or even the occasional modern-day GI or superhero comic-book character can take their bows. Such characters (used with extreme moderation!) can provide both comic relief and interesting player tests. A Prince of Amber or Chaos from Roger Zelazny's Amber series, for example, could hellride an unwilling player character to a new plane and leave him there with little chance of returning, as Corwin did to Ganelon. Handle the prince as a high-level psionic and the "hellride" as the discipline of probability travel.

Gates also provide a means of shifting characters into a new, prepared setting when the DM is changing campaigns — i.e., from a D&D® setting to an AD&D milieu, or when one campaign has gotten out of hand and a fresh start is desired — without placing long-played characters into limbo forever. To cut down on the use of artifacts, etc., the DM merely has them fail to work in the new plane. (Referring to Zelazny again, consider that the only explosive that worked in Amber was not gunpowder, but jeweler's rouge.)

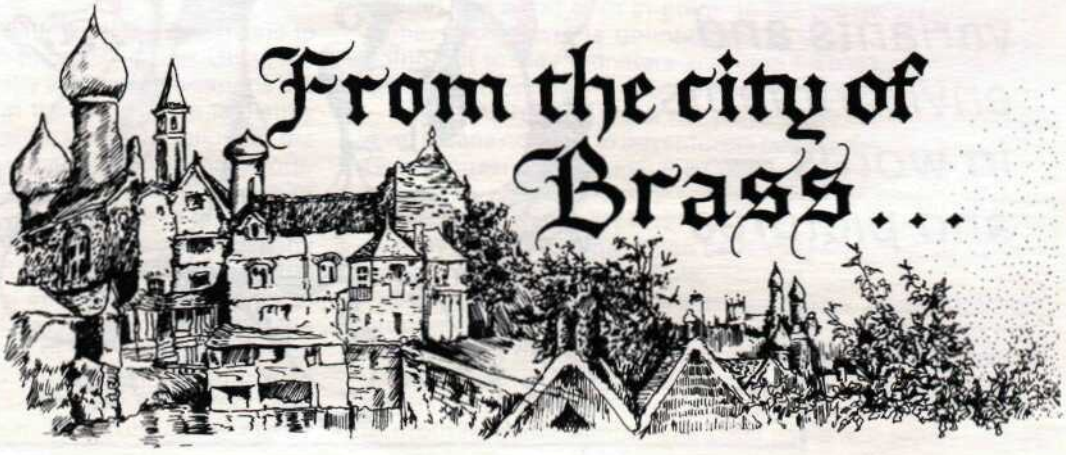
Gates can also be used to combine the campaigns of various DMs, either by direct gate link, or by providing a "common ground": an area, like Michael Moorcock's Tanelorn, which exists in all planes. And "since Tanelorn exists in all planes at all times it is easier for a man who dwells there to pass between the planes, discover the particular one he seeks."[1]

Various game systems could be combined by gates linking one game setting (e.g., The Old West) to another (Camelot, for instance). The idea could also be adapted to *Traveller* or other SF games, operating in the manner of Larry Niven's matter transmission booths or James H. Schmitz's subspace portals.[2]

Gates have an advantage over an *Amulet of the Planes*, which can force the DM to create, in depth, any one of 21 to 24 planes at the roll of a die. The problems this or similar means of transport (such as cursed scrolls or ancient grimoires — cf. *Codex of the Infinite Planes*) can produce are obvious. Foreknowledge (and preparation) of the players' destination avoids frantic dice-rolling a step ahead of the explorers ("ahh... you see, um... a range of mountains far in the distance, and, ahh... a band of orcs standing 20 feet away from you... there are — ahh, fifteen of them"; followed by frantic rolling of hit points, etc., followed by rapid onset of nervous breakdown on the poor DM's part, not to mention the players.) A *Cubic Gate* or *Well of Many Worlds* is much better, but often the DM does not wish the players to control such items.

In its most common form, the gate is merely a space between two standing stones. It may be one of three basic types: those which operate constantly; those which must be triggered by the use of a spell, talisman, mechanical process, or word; and those which operate periodically (often in accordance with stellar configurations, phases of the moon, or solstices and equinoxes) regardless of the presence or absence of travellers. Typically, gates are both ancient (locations and working almost forgotten, or distorted by legend) and well nigh indestructible. If they are destroyed, it is usually by an explosion of awesome intensity. Occasionally they are clearly the work of superior (usually lost) technology, and may have safeguards and traps built into the controls.

DMs will find much of interest and usefulness in fantasy and science fiction literature, and this is as true for gates as it is for monsters or magic. Some books and stories contain concepts ideal for use by the DM. The Vanishing Tower is perhaps the most spectacular of these. It is a small stone castle, sections of which appear shadowy and vague. Lights play about its battle-



ments. It flickers from one plane to another, spending only minutes or at the most a few hours at any location. There should be a warning flicker just before it shifts. (The DM should count to ten, quickly, before shifting the tower.) The shift should be more or less instantaneous and under the directional control of no person or entity (this will prevent players from making it a cheap means of all-powerful transportation, or worse, a well nigh unassailable fortress which can shift away to escape danger in any one plane). The only exception to this lack of player control is the provision (by means of a *Limited Wish* or *Wish* spell) for forcing the tower away from the plane of the spell caster. The spell caster should have no knowledge of, nor control over, its new destination when away. The DM, however, should know (and resist the temptation to change) the tower's destinations and the occasions on which it shifts. When using either the Tower or the Ship (see below) a chart should be drawn up showing the circuit of planes travelled through. Dice can determine the length of time spent in each plane.

In Moorcock's novels, the "ordinary laws of sorcery"[3] do not work within the Tower due to the rapidity of its shifting and the varying effectiveness of magic from plane to plane, but individual DM's must make their own decisions. It is suggested that psionics and the following spells not work within the tower, or through its walls from inside or out: *Chariot of Sustarre, Contact Other Plane, Control Weather* (and similar spells), *Dimension Door, Drawmij's Instant Summons, Gate, Locate Object, Passwall, Plane Shift, Stone Tell, Teleport, Wizard Eye* (and related "spy" spells), *Word of Recall.* It is a matter of choice whether a magic-user within the tower should be permitted to recall a *Leomund's Tiny Chest.*

The tower generally enters any given plane in relatively the same spot (see opening quotation) each time. Note that this is by no means certain, and the irregularity of its presence (coupled with the length of absence) will in most planes deny precise knowledge (and perhaps guarding) of its point of entry. Often only old, distorted legends and crumbling, forgotten records will hint at where it may be found when it does appear.

Often the Tower will be inhabited by creatures from the various planes it visits. (If the Tower has visited any of the Nine Hells at all recently, it will certainly have been garrisoned; one might assume the archdevils have given standing orders regarding this.) Other monster possibilities are obvious.

In the original Moorcock book, a dwarf named Voilodon Ghagnasdiak inhabited the tower (after discovering its plane-shifting properties the hard way). Too fearful to leave, but very lonely, he captured those who entered the tower and forced them to be his companions until he grew tired of them and killed them. He had a number of winged, monstrous servants (seemingly equivalent to gargoyles) who could be harmed only by the scythes they bore. These monsters were initially imprisoned inside balls which the dwarf would throw at those who menaced him. In the depths of the tower was a vault filled with the treasure of all those who had ventured into the tower and fallen prey to Ghagnasdiak. Such a hoard would include many strange artifacts and much magical treasure. In the original novel, one such artifact was the Runestaff, which apparently has the power to halt the tower's shifting (although it was never so used). It can itself shift its holder and anyone touching him or her to any plane desired — whereupon it will vanish.

The Ship That Sails The Seas of Fate is also of Moorcock's invention. It is a ship of dark and strange design, with a curving, warlike prow, ornately carved rails and figurehead, elevated decks fore and aft. With a tireless crew of two, a blind captain and his twin the steersman, it sails through the planes on an apparently foreordained route. As the captain tells Elric, "We'll sight land shortly. If you would disembark and seek your own world, I should advise you do so now. This is the closest we shall ever come again to your plane."[4]

Always shrouded in mist, the Dark Ship seems to spend much of its time in the astral plane, en route from a sea in one plane to another sea in the next, rather than shifting instantaneously as the Tower does.

The *magnum opus* of gate systems is Philip Jose Farmer's five-volume *World of Tiers* series.[5] Gates therein are of many types, most commonly doorframes or hoops, or matching crescents (which must be joined to activate the gate) of seemingly indestructible metal. Passage through them is so instantaneous that one may step through an open doorway and be gated into another room (identical to the one the door physically opens into) without realizing it. Air passes through the gates automatically, to prevent the 'pop' of air rushing into a sudden vacuum as someone vanishes. Gate fields can cut anything, and are used (at various points in the series) to neatly carve up huge rocks, trees, and enemies of various sorts.

Gates may be portable, or partly so (one crescent set into a floor or boulder, often concealed, and the other loose, usually hidden elsewhere). Gates may be set to allow passage of masses up to a certain maximum; thus, men or large animals can be kept out. Gates are usually found in pairs (that is, entry and exit, or vice versa) which share the same "resonant frequency." Such a frequency may be changed by the use of sophisticated machinery to turn the gates off (perhaps cutting someone in half!) or align them with other gates, changing the destination any given gate leads to. Gates may be set for one-time operation, random resonance changes, or activation only by code words. They may also "flipflop"; that is, automatically change their resonance after being activated, so that the next time the gate is used it will lead somewhere else.

Gates may also be traps (and in Farmer's books, usually are). They may be set to kill those trying to use them or entering them in the wrong direction or manner,[6] or lead to "inescapable" prison cells, undesirable planes, or to almost certain death (i.e. into midair, a mile from the ground). The hero of the series, Kickaha the Trickster, escaped from one such cell by crouching atop an empty food platter and being gated to the kitchen. (Gates are often — especially in cells — used as dumbwaiters,

with a matching pair of gates in the kitchen and set into the top of the dining table.)

The usual way in which gates kill is an electrical discharge powerful enough to crisp flesh, but Farmer also has one that shoots burning oil at anyone standing in front of it when it is first activated (thus, anyone in the know would stand to the side, toss a stone through the gate, and wait for the fireworks to die down). Another underhanded trick, ideal for scattering parties, is a second, delayed gate set off by passing through the first (so as to catch the third or fourth person in the marching order).

The most spectacular trap is a circuit or series of gates, each activated by the preceding one, so that people entering any gate in the circuit are trapped, blinking in rapid succession from one location to another. They are vulnerable to attacks during the few seconds they are in each loction (usually by missiles), and can leave the circuit only by leaping out of a gate during that very brief time. If they misjudge the timing, they are bisected or otherwise mangled, as part of them is gated on to the next location. A base chance of 60% for leaping out successfully is suggested, plus 5% for every point of dexterity over 15, and minus 5% for every point under 12. For every 10 hit points of damage that the character is presently suffering from, also subtract 5% from the chance of success. If a character is caught by the gate shift, he or she must save vs. paralyzation or be cut in half (instant death). If the save is made, the gate is considered to have severed a limb or something of the sort, and such a wound will have to be cauterized to prevent the character from bleeding to death. The character will take 2d12 damage and must save vs. system shock or die. If the trapped person has a friend at one of the locations visited by the circuit, the friend can stop the circuit by jamming the empty gate so full of matter that the maximum mass it can shift is reached and it stops working, shutting down the circuit. Of course, the trapped person will be freed elsewhere in the circuit, which may be several planes away.

An artifact, the Horn of Shambarinen, has the power of opening gates between planes whenever its seven notes are sounded in the proper sequence at a resonant point in any plane (the DM must determine which plane the resonant point is adjacent to, and thus where the gate will lead). It can also match the resonance of any existing gate and operate it (without the usual key, device, or missing crescent). Gates glow if the Horn is played close to them (say, within 60'), and the horn-blower can see through the gate into wherever it leads. The Horn resembles a silver *Horn of Valhalla*, with seven buttons set in a line along its top, and the mouth of the horn is filled with a silvery web. It is constructed of an unknown and seemingly indestructible metal.

A more recent series of books, C.J. Cherryh's Morgaine trilogy,[7] illustrates the attitude of medieval-level cultures to gates in their midst. An early and excellent use of gates is found in C.S. Lewis's *Chronicles of Narnia*,[8] which incorporates a fascinating campaign setting: The Wood Between The Worlds. This is an ancient woods into which almost all gates open, and as a result it is peopled with many strange and wonderful creatures. A tavern in such a place would abound with fascinating and powerful NPCs. And that painting over the bar, if one stares at it for a moment, can be stepped through, into ... Well, have fun.

Notes

1. Michael Moorcock, *The Vanishing Tower*, p. 152 (DAW paperback).

2. See Schmitz's *The Lion Game* (a DAW paperback) for a huge dungeon of rooms connected by portals, with many traps and "lost" sections.

3. Op. cit., p. 159.

4. Michael Moorcock, *The Sailor On The Seas Of Fate*, p. 58 (DAW paperback).

5. The books, available in Ace paperback editions, are (in chronological order): *The Maker Of Universes, The Gates of Creation, A Private Cosmos, Behind The Walls Of Terra*, and *The Lavalite World*. Essential references, all.

6. One such "killer gate" was a doorframe revolving rapidly in midair. Identification of the "safe side" was, of course, very difficult. Another might be a doorframe, only the upper half of which is a gate, so that anyone stepping through the gate in a normal manner (rather than leaping) will be cut in half as only their upper body gates away.

7. *Gate of Ivrel, Well of Shiuan*, and *Fires of Azeroth* (DAW paperbacks).

8. In chronological order: *The Magician's Nephew; The Lion, The Witch & The Wardrobe; Prince Caspian; The Voyage of the Dawn Treader; The Silver Chair; The Horse and His Boy;* and *The Last Battle*, available in Puffin paperbacks in Canada and Macmillan paperbacks in the United States. The first five bristle with material of interest to D&D players. The Wood Between The Worlds appears in Chapter 3 of *The Magician's Nephew*.

SEPT. 1979: #29

Inns and taverns

by I. Marc Carlson

Inns and taverns frequently appear in D&D® and AD&D™ games, yet may not be utilized to their fullest potential either by the DM or the player characters. The reason for this is that the function of inns and taverns is not fully realized, and they can be difficult to design and stock.

The two terms "inn" and "tavern" have become almost interchangeable in modern usage; however, this was not always the case. An inn, by definition, is a place where travelers could obtain food and shelter for a price. A tavern can be considered a place where ale and other drinks would be served in addition to food. An example of a tavern in modern society would be the English pub or public house. In some instances an inn would have a tavern on the premises, or within short walking distance.

Small communities (population up to 150) would probably not have a need for an inn. These small communities might have a tavern (75% chance) to serve as a community center, as well as being a place wherein travelers could obtain food and drink. For lodging, a traveler finding himself or herself in a small community as night fell would probably either be forced to sleep outside or beg shelter from the local residents. Early in history there were no inns, so travelers and pilgrims would seek shelter in the homes of local farmers or townspeople. These solicitations for shelter were frequently successful, since travelers were an excellent source of information about the outside world.

As communities become larger (populations of 150-500), the concept of providing food and shelter to travelers in exchange for money becomes more prevalent. Often communities of this size would support from 1-10 inns, depending upon the community's location. The closer the community to a heavily traveled trade route, the greater the number of inns it would have.

Large towns and trading centers could support a great

number of inns and taverns. While we do not generally consider the medieval community as being heavily populated, one reference states that in the mid-15th century, the land area of Paris consisted of three square miles. In these three square miles there were 150,000 people and 5,000 inns and taverns.

The number of guest rooms in an inn generally ranged from 5-50, depending upon the needs and location of the community. As stated earlier, an inn might have a tavern-type area located within the inn proper or nearby.

For maximum effectiveness in a D&D campaign, a large number of the rooms in an inn should be filled. Some of the "common" travelers could have come from merchant caravans (60%) or pilgrim bands (40%). Other guests might include king's messengers bearing important documents, adventurers of various sorts, solitary high-level wizards, spies, or any other characters developed by the DM to add zest to the game.

The cost for rooms would range from 5 copper pieces to 5 gold pieces per night, or weekly rates of between 5 and 20 gold pieces. These rates would generally include two meals per day. Drinks would not usually be included in these rates.

For one's money, one gets a bed, normally made up with clean sheet and blankets (if not, there is a 10% chance of bedbugs, ticks or disease). There may be bathing facilities, but not normally after dusk, and possibly also laundry service; tenants will customarily receive a washbasin, a pitcher of water, and directions to the nearest outhouse. There is a 75% chance that the inn will be able to feed and shelter one's horse (or whatever), for 5 silver to 1 gold piece per night. The care one's horse will receive would probably include walking it to cool it off, washing it and brushing it down, and feeding it.

The chores around the inn would generally be done by a youth apprenticed to the innkeeper. These apprentices were sometimes called ostlers. Apprentices may have been the sons of the innkeeper or other youths who wished to learn the trade of innkeeping. An apprentice would remain in the master's service until his 18th birthday (having begun the training at about 12 years of age). Their tasks include work in the stable, the kitchen and tavern. They would rarely be involved in handling money and did not tend the bar until the last years of their apprenticeship. There is only a 25% chance that an apprentice is literate; however, most can perform simple mathematical computations.

The apprentices (1-4) are overseen by the innkeeper. While innkeepers have become stereotyped in literature as being short, fat, balding men with notoriously bad memories, this does not need to be the case. Innkeepers are male (95% of the time) and can be short (20%), of medium height (60%), or tall (20%). They are thin (20%), average build (40%), or stout (40%). They are normally observant (a 70% chance of them being able to remember every detail of a particular event). They are not easily deceived, though rarely can they be considered clever. Half of all innkeepers are lawful, 20% are neutral and 30% are chaotic.

Most innkeepers (90%) are married. In medieval society, women were relegated to a secondary role, limited to such activities as cooking and sewing for customers. The innkeeper's wife normally had from 1-5 young women to assist her with her tasks. These young women also milked the cows and assisted with the other chores, such as gathering eggs. These young women sometimes also act as waitresses.

The activities of the inn or tavern centered around the common, or the public room. It is in these areas that your players will take their meals and mingle with the other guests and townspeople. Common rooms would be large, at least 40'x30', and have a seating capacity for at least 60 people. Some common rooms will be dark and dim, while others will be brightly lit and cheery. It all depends on the owner.

Food prices will vary as will the types of food available. Below is a typical menu of the food and drink items found in taverns:

Food

Beavertails	5 sp	Roast turkey	3 gp
Snake stew	5 sp	Roast pheasant	5 gp
Rabbit stew	3 sp	Venison	6 gp
Wolf stew	3 sp	Mutton	4 sp
Chicken eggs (ea)	3 cp	Vegetables	3 cp
Lizard steaks	2 gp	Crab	3 gp
Beef steaks	10 sp	Caviar & salmon	6 sp
Roast chicken	5 sp	Whale blubber	10 gp
Roast duck	8 sp	Beef ribs	8 sp
Ham	5 gp	Bread	5 cp
Haggis	5 sp	Otter stew	15 sp
Salad (lettuce)	4 cp	Snake eggs	5 gp
Lobster	2 sp	Duck eggs	11 sp
Shark	3 gp	Eel steaks	4 gp
Fried snake	3 sp	Frog legs	1 gp

Drink

Wine (good)	15 sp	Grog	4 sp
Wine (watery)	10 sp	Rum	8 sp
Mead	10 sp	Beer	8 cp
Ale	3 sp		

(Drink prices are for a 16-oz. tankard)

Common rooms not only served as a place for guests to partake in eating and drinking, but also as a gathering place for the townspeople. The common room was a place where news of the world could be shared, and it also served as a place where entertainment was held. A traveling minstrel might be a guest at the inn, or the local residents might bring their own musical instruments. A traveling group of actors might be housed at the inn (10% probability). These companies performed in the inn's courtyard. The fee charged for such a performance would usually be one copper piece per member of the audience.

Inns and taverns also had underground rooms set aside as root cellars and food storage. These would be accessible through doors in the kitchen or just outside the rear kitchen doors.

While some inns and taverns were located in towns, others were located just outside of towns, usually in wooded areas. The inns may have a courtyard, a barn, a stable, a well, and at least two outhouses. Outside the wooded area where the inn is located, there would be fields and farms supplying the inn and the nearby town.

Inns outside of large communities were usually located a day's horseback ride from each other. Therefore, they played an important role in medieval society in service to travelers, to serve social needs and as a place where the latest news could be heard.

Inns and taverns:
Original layout, September 1979; issue #29

GOOD EVENING

by Lenard Lakofka

There is much information on the vampire, but just as much is left unsaid and unquantified when the details of the play of the monster are studied. While many of the things stated about the vampire herein may seem obvious, nevertheless arguments on each of these topics have arisen in this DM's experience.

The vampire has 8 + 3 hit dice, and once calculated the hit point total will not vary; thus, when the monster regenerates in its coffin a new hit-point total is not generated. A vampire can have its minions bury a figure it has killed so that human can rise as a vampire on the next night. Note that humanoids and demi-humans cannot become vampires.

In theory, since the "draining" of a figure is due to the Negative Material Plane force, a humanoid or demihuman "drained" by a vampire might become a lesser undead that exists on the Negative Material Plane. However, this makes the vampire too strong and is not allowed.

It should be noted that a vampire is unlikely to want too many other "lesser" vampires under his/her control. Thus the number of vampires under the control of a full 8 + 3 HD vampire should be limited to no more than four at one time. If this rule is not observed, entire small towns would be full of vampires in the span of a few weeks! Furthermore, "lesser" vampires will not create other "lesser" vampires answerable to themselves; only a full vampire will create "lesser" vampires as a matter of will and choice. Inadvertent creation of a vampire is possible in either case if a body killed by a vampire is buried and subsequently the body is dug up (assuming that the burying of the vampire's kill does not properly prevent the body from rising again as a vampire).

This brings up the point of how a body can be properly "disposed of" after being killed by a vampire or a "lesser" vampire. This process should be a simple one and accomplishable in a few ways: 1) The body and head can be separated; 2) The body can be burned; 3) The body can be disposed of just as a vampire would be disposed of; or 4) The body is drained of blood and either a *Bless, Prayer, Chant* or *Exorcism* is said over the corpse. Other reasonable means can be ruled on by the DM.

The vampire's existence on the Negative Material Plane is such that normal invisibility can be foiled by his/her ability to see into another plane. My personal ruling in this regard is a range of 40 feet with a 50% chance per direct viewing (that is, looking right at the invisible creature/object) of seeing the invisible object. Naturally, the size of the invisible object can vary this percentage. The vampire also has a 5% natural chance to observe invisibility due to its level and intelligence (see the Dungeon Masters Guide).

Other vampire forms

The vampire has the ability to become a giant bat and also a gaseous cloud at will. This transformation is very rapid (taking only 1-4 segments with the 4 segments only being used if the vampire is surprised), and the new form can operate after but a 1-segment delay. This applies to the alternate forms of bat to cloud, cloud to vampire, etc. In the bat and cloud forms the abilities of the vampire are, at best, poorly defined. First of all, the vampire cannot drain levels, *Summon, Charm* or use its physical strength in either of the alternate forms. Changing to another form will cause all carried items to change also.

As a bat, the vampire has the following statistics:

Hit dice (for attack purposes), 2 + 1; Hit points, based upon its full (8 + 3) hit dice potential; Move, 18"; Damage per attack, 1-2 but not draining ability; susceptibility to spells is just the same as in vampire form (a full list of spell immunities follows); a magic weapon is needed to inflict damage.

The bat can see with the vampire's eyes (i.e., it has infravision) but it cannot detect invisibility. The vampire does not regenerate in the bat form. The bat has only a minor existence on the Negative Material Plane, so there is no draining of levels or strength by the bat's attack (touch). The bat form never has any abilities of the vampire's former profession in life. The bat is not an animal in any way, so spells affecting animals only do not come into play. However, if the vampire summons bats and then turns into a bat himself/herself, he/she can lead the summoned bats in some direction, even away from a party. It can not *Command* the bats in the classic sense; it can only obtain reaction by its own example which the bats will mimic.

In gaseous form, the vampire has different abilities and characteristics. Its sense of vision is reduced, and it cannot see with 20/20 vision nor with infravision; a *slight* blurring effect comes into play. The gaseous cloud can move at 6" (faster than the potion-bestowed *gaseous form*). It has no hit dice, attack abilities, regeneration abilities, summon abilities, charm abilities or draining abilities. It is immune to all magic except *Fireball, Lightning Bolt* (½ damage), cold attacks (½ damage), air elementals (double damage; this includes djinni whirlwinds) and *Gust of Wind* (which can overcome the 6" movement speed).

Even if the vampire is "scattered to the four winds" it can re-form, given time (1-100 rounds; the decision must be based upon conditions). If it is split up and cannot re-form (if part is in a container like a bottle, or part is on one side of a wall and part on the other with the connecting hole blocked), the vampire is not killed unless it is exposed to sunlight or unless it was on the way back to its coffin because of a *forced* assumption of the gaseous state. If underground, the two parts could remain apart for years and still re-form; however, if the coffin has been disposed of while the vampire was split up, then another matter arises. In cloud form the vampire is absolutely free to move as it chooses if it has not been *forced* into gaseous state (i.e., lost all hit points due to combat). If the vampire is forced into gaseous state, it must make for its coffin by a reasonably direct route (no going out of the way to cross a river or bog).

The cloud can re-form quickly; it can also ooze through any space that is not airtight. It can even seep through soil that is not too moist at the rate of 1" per hour. In cloud form, the vampire has almost no Negative Material Plane existence, but the link is not completely broken. Note that if hard pressed, a vampire may break off melee by assuming the gaseous state.

It is a wise decision to set a hit-point total at which the vampire will automatically go gaseous in the next melee round. The vampire, is, after all, a very intelligent monster and it will not waste itself on being forced into gaseous form if it can avoid that. During forced assumption of gaseous form, the vampire is *most* vulnerable, since it can not do anything at all for 8 hours after entering its coffin in the cloud form. If the vampire is beyond the 2-hour limit of travel to reach its coffin, it will most certainly assume gaseous form before being forced into the situation.

Note that if the vampire takes damage from one of the listed spells while in "free will" gaseous form, it could lose all hit points (remember, it does not regenerate in this form) and be forced to go to its coffin at once.

Immunity to spells

The next subject concerning the vampire is its immunity to various spells and spell forms. Clearly the vampire is immune to *Sleep*, all *Charm* spells, all *Hold* spells, and all forms of poison and paralyzation attacks. In like manner, it is obviously immune to death magic. Under the realm of charms and holds, it is a logical extension that *Suggestion* will not work either. However, arguments from two different points of view can be offered in the case of some spells and spell types: *Fear, Confusion, Magic Jar, Cause Wounds, Cause Disease, Cause Blindness, Friends, Web, Stinking Cloud, Enfeeblement, Illusions, Polymorphs, Feeblemind, Raise Dead, Reincarnation, Power Word Stun* and probably a few other cases I have yet to run into.

I rule that the following spells from the above list do not affect a vampire, as extensions of its normal immunities: *Fear, Friends, Stinking Cloud,* any illusions that charm in some way, *Raise Dead* and *Reincarnation.*

Spells from the list above that have full effect on a vampire are *Confusion, Magic Jar, Cause Wounds, Cause Blindness* (if the vampire must be touched, the loss of 2 levels is automatic; a figure who delivers a spell by touch must do so with the bare hand, never with a gloved or covered hand), *Feeblemind* and *Power Word Stun.*

Spells from the above list that I consider as variable in effect, and those effects, are as follows:

Cause Disease: The vampire can throw this one off by returning to its coffin for 8 hours of rest.

Web: The vampire has two ways out. It can assume gaseous form, or because the vampire exists on another plane the *Web* can, at best, be half strength against the monster — one-fourth if a saving throw is made. It takes a vampire but 1-4 segments to become gaseous, but it must remain in that form for a full round before taking normal or bat shape.

Enfeeblement: Since the vampire is already dead and since this spell is based upon cold, I rule that this spell has only half effect, or no effect if the normal saving throw is made.

Polymorphs: Since the vampire is an inherent shapechanger — though limited as to what forms it can take — polymorphing the monster is only *temporary* in effect. The vampire can shapechange back to normal form, bat form or cloud form in the next melee round. It is illogical to have an undead become an elf, a red dragon or a beetle, since by its non-living nature the resultant polymorph will also be "non-living." Thus, a polymorph of an undead always results in an undead, but the polymorph would not have the powers and abilities of the new or old form, save for locomotion and speech. (This rule prevents an evil magic-user from making a shadow into a wraith, for instance.)

It is also noted that vampires take but half damage from cold and electricity, but of course if a saving throw is made the damage is one-fourth. Note that a *Flame Tongue* or a *Frost Brand* sword does not prevent normal regeneration of hit points to a vampire.

Regeneration and returning to the coffin

The vampire does not regenerate hit points in bat form or gaseous form. It must be in "human" shape to regenerate. Note that regeneration, as well as other vampire powers, is possible deep underground regardless of the time of day outside.

I rule in the following way when it comes to what constitutes "deep underground." If the vampire is abroad, goes outside, or sees daylight (does not have to be *exposed* to daylight), it must return to its coffin at the next daylight period and must remain there through the day. However, if the coffin lid is opened in a non-daylight/sunlight situation, the vampire can defend itself. Thus, the old canard about attacking a vampire during the day is false.

Remember, this is not the Bram Stoker vampire, this is the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® vampire. The AD&D™ vampire drains levels due to coexistence with the Negative Plane and does not necessarily bite the victim. Even if "far beneath the surface of the ground," the vampire must return to its coffin eventually — I rule once each week. If the vampire does not return to its coffin 1) within a week if underground the entire time; 2) each night if exposed to the outside (including seeing daylight); or 3) within 3 hours of being reduced by melee (damaged) to zero hit points, then the monster crosses over to the Negative Plane exclusively and cannot return. On the Negative Plane the vampire is virtually powerless, since its powers come from the *coexistence* on two planes. If it does go to the Negative Plane, all items it was carrying will remain behind.

The "lesser" vampire

The next big area of discussion is over what type of monster results when a vampire kills a human, the human is buried and then is unearthed the next night (or later). How the figure is killed is one major bone of contention: Does the figure die due to damage or due to being drained to zero level? If the figure dies due to damage (not all necessarily from the vampire), then the figure can retain abilities from his/her former profession. If a 12th-level Wizard, for example, is wounded by some form of attack and is then touched by a vampire such that he simultaneously becomes a Necromancer but is also killed due to damage from the vampire's touch, the resultant monster will be a "lesser" vampire who is also a Necromancer!

This Necromancer/vampire must read his spells just as before, and rest periods are the same but are only allowed in the coffin. Since the figure is not alive, however, he may not again become a Wizard by experience, nor may he learn new spells. Furthermore, items that require a touch of a human hand (like a wand, for example) will not function in his hand since he is not alive. As DM, you can rule in numerous ways as to which items need the touch of a living hand (body) in order to function. This rule limits the power of the vampire spellcaster.

If a figure dies by full draining of levels, then all abilities and privileges of the former profession are lost — the figure is a vampire, nothing more. Note: Vampires do not willingly want a

"lesser" vampire whose profession level is very high (7th level or higher), since if the lesser vampire ever gains full vampire status it may not be friendly to its former master.

Exactly what is a lesser vampire, as described in the Monster Manual by the phrase, "...appropriately strengthed vampire under control of its slayer"? It is the monster created by a full vampire after killing/draining the victim. This monster follows, to some extent, the rules set for other Negative Plane undead.

If a wight kills a figure, a "...half-strength wight under (its) control..." will result. The same statement is made for the wraith and the spectre. Yet, "If the vampire which slew the creature is itself killed, the vampires created by it become free willed monsters."

Somehow all of this must be quantified. First of all, a lesser vampire always falls under the control of a full vampire — even if killed by another lesser vampire (which would have been already under the control of the same full vampire). As long as the full vampire maintains control, the lesser's will is subject to its command.

Now the questions arise: Is the lesser vampire half-strength or not, and if it is released to become "free willed" does it then grow to full strength? I'd say that the lesser vampire is three-fourths strength (in all respects, not simply physical strength) compared to a full vampire, and if control is lost the lesser vampire does indeed grow to full vampire status. To put this in rule form: A lesser vampire must be uncontrolled for 7 days before it will become free willed. Thus, if the full vampire gives a command to a lesser vampire or is in its presence at least once every 7 days, the lesser vampire remains a lesser vampire. If the lesser becomes free willed it will take two full days to grow to full vampire status. Once a lesser vampire has gained free will, the full vampire cannot regain control of it (even during the two-day growth period); however, there will exist a special relationship between the former controlling vampire and the new full vampire. The former controlling vampire can have all of its statements and commands to the other vampire take on the power of a *Suggestion* which the newly free willed vampire must save against. While this may seem like a contradiction of the "immune to charm" rule, consider the circumstances of the exchange and the existing relationship. Note that the full vampire did not have to *Charm* the lesser vampire while the lesser was still alive!

The statistics for the lesser vampire are as follows: 6 + 2 hit dice; AC 2; Move 12/18; Damage/attack 5-10; Special attacks: Energy drain (see below); Special defenses: +1 or better to hit but silver does half damage; Magic resistance: As discussed herein and as for a full vampire.

The important differences between a lesser vampire and a full vampire are due to the fact that the lesser does not exist as strongly on the Negative Material Plane as the full vampire. If uncontrolled, the lesser gains the "free will" needed to attain full access to the Negative Plane. Note the fewer hit dice. The energy drain of the lesser vampire is one level, plus a 50% chance for a second level to be drained. Finally, the lesser vampire *is* subject to a *Raise Dead* spell, if it fails its saving throw vs. magic. The lesser's former profession abilities are retained, with the obvious exceptions of those abilities defined by alignment. (There is no such thing as a vampire paladin.)

A lesser vampire's physical strength is tied to its Negative Plane existence, so a lesser vampire does have a physical strength of 18/76. However, alignment and intelligence are open to some interpretation.

If the figure in life is stupid and foolish and his/her alignment is neutral, lawful or good, the transition to becoming a vampire should not automatically change his/her intelligence or alignment. Obviously a vampire is evil, and that change is automatic. But a lesser vampire can view evil from a lawful or neutral posture, at least initially. Eventually it will become chaotic, but this could take a period of time. I allow the new vampire a saving throw taken weekly to see if the alignment change occurs.

The "translation" of intelligence and wisdom is another matter. If, in life, the figure is exceptionally smart or wise, then the resultant lesser vampire can have "exceptional" intelligence and/or wisdom of 15 or 16 at best. If the figure is not too bright, then the resultant vampire should not be too bright either. The vampire can acquire "cunning" which the character may not have had in life, but that should be worth an increase of no more than 2-8 points of intelligence *or* wisdom (not both).

The question of intelligence/wisdom is important because if vampires made full use of all their mental faculties and were lawful besides, they would probably rule great sections of any world — perhaps even the *entire* world! The reason this does not occur is because of the vampire's chaotic nature, which sometimes acts to offset its cleverness or cunning.

A vampire can go on for many hours or days picking away at a party before a final outcome is assured, one way or the other. If a vampire knows its coffin is threatened and that is its last one, the vampire will become *extremely* clever. Yet before any vampire puts into effect a really clever attack or defense, the DM should have the vampire make a saving throw to reflect his/her chaotic nature. In this way, the party has a better chance.

Summoning and charming

The vampire must be limited in its summoning ability, or thousands of rats and hundreds of wolves will appear. I allow a vampire only three summonings each night, and there must be at least a full hour between each. I contend that this summons is of the magical *Monster Summoning* type, and thus the argument about how many wolves, bats and rats are actually in the area is not germane. If actual wolves, bats and/or rats are available and able to reach the summoner within 2-12 melee rounds, then those actual creatures will come, of course.

Characteristics of the summoned monsters are as follows:

Bats: 90% of the time they should be the mundane sort that hang around in caves, bell towers, etc. They have 1-4 hit points; armor class 7 (due to size and speed); move 12" (but usually flurry about figures when a vampire summons them); "inadvertent" damage of 1 point 50% of the time — if and only if at least five bats are swarming around a single figure and the armor class of the victim indicates a hit. Swarms reduce the ability "to hit" by 3 points.

There is a 10% chance in any summoning of bats that one vampire bat will be in the swarm for every 10 bats (round down) that appear. The vampire bat has 1 hit die, AC 8, Move 9", and does 1 point of damage per hit. In addition, if it does hit it drains 1-4 points of blood just as a stirge but then flies away after 8 points are drained.

Rats: 90% of the time they should be the mundane sort that scurries about in dungeons, though they will always be especially large rats. They have 1-4 hit points; AC 8; bite causes 1 point of damage (no chance of disease). But 10% of the time (and only in especially deep dungeons), Giant Sumatran rats will appear, as per the Monster Manual. The quantity of these giant rats is 7-70 and not 10-100.

Wolves: Their type should be a function of the climate. If in polar regions, winter wolves should appear, but only 2-7 would come. In other areas the chance of the normal wolf is 70% for the full 3-18 in number (see the Monster Manual); however, 30% of the time 2-14 (1d6 + 1d8) dire wolves will appear.

Lastly, we come to the charm ability of a vampire. When is a vampire's gaze met? Can it be avoided? I use 1d20 for the figure meleeing the vampire and 1d12 for the vampire (the case in which a vampire meets someone casually can easily be adjudicated). If the roll on the 12-sided die equals or exceeds the roll on the 20-sided die, the glance has been met. If the vampire is surprised, use 1d6; if the victim is surprised, use 1d8 for him/her. The intended victim, in melee, can purposefully avoid the glance by not facing the monster directly. Thus, the vampire will use 1d8 vs. the player's 1d20, but the player is then -2 to hit the vampire and his/her own effective armor class is 2 levels lower. The player can't hit his/her opponent as easily, and since

his/her own anticipation when attacked in melee is inhibited by not facing the monster, his/her armor class suffers.

When the vampire does charm, the victim immediately ceases hostility — no verbal command need be given. This charm is far more powerful than a *Charm Person* spell, but obvious self-destruction will not be allowed. The charm is so powerful that the victim will fight his friends (at -2 to hit due to his/her zombie-like condition) and even allow him/herself to be drained of levels by the characteristic vampire bite.

Hopefully, I haven't missed too much, but every DM knows how "inventive" players can be. A little common sense, regardless of what the textbooks omit or gloss over, is fully the prerogative of the Dungeon Master.

MAY 1979: #25

VARIETIES OF VAMPIRES

by R.P. Smith

Several different types of vampires are described in classical legends around the world, and these can be put into the D&D® or AD&D™ format for use as "surprise" vampires whose weaknesses and strengths will not generally be known by players. Not all known vampires are included here, just the more interesting ones.

Number appearing, armor class, hit dice, and treasure type are the same for all vampires. Normal weapons will not hurt any vampire. All types of vampires will avoid mirrors, garlic, or crosses. With only one exception, vampires will go into gaseous form if they lose all their hit points by magic.

One must also consider the question of origin. If people can only become vampires through the bite of a vampire, where did the first one come from? According to the legends, the means of becoming a vampire can range from a simple death-bed curse and excommunication, or the characteristics can be passed through ancestry (e.g. one type was said to be an Albanian of Turkish origin, another was said to have red hair), through witchcraft, or through violent death. The latter one is the most likely method for use in a D&D campaign. To foster the creation of vampires, it can be ruled that any body left unguarded without benefit of a *Bless* spell from a cleric will become a vampire within seven days.

Asanbosam (Africa): These vampires appear as men (9 hit dice), women (8 hit dice), or children (7 hit dice) who look normal except for a pair of hooks instead of feet. They can charm at minus 3, (except against clerics, whom they avoid) and can throw a single *Sleep* spell per night. They can call 3-18 leopards or 2-12 tigers. Only a cleric can kill the asanbosam.

Burcolakas (Greece): It has a swollen, tense, hard skin. It can scream once per night, deafening all in hearing range for 24 hours, no saving throw. It can also kill, not only by draining life levels, but by naming its victim by name and commanding the victim to perform a fatal action. It can imitate any voice it hears, with as much of a chance of being detected as an assassin has of being discovered in disguise. It controls 10-100 rats, but no wolves. To defeat it, a foe must cut off and burn its head.

Catacano (Crete, Rhodes): Always grinning with very white teeth, this vampire spits blood (with a chance of hitting as for a giant slug's attack) which causes horrible burns. It can charm at minus 2. To defeat this creature, a foe must burn its nails, boil its head in vinegar, or submerge its body in salt water.

Lobishumen (Brazil): This vampire looks like a small, stumpy, hunch-backed monkey with a yellow face, bloodless lips, black teeth, a bushy beard, and plush-covered feet. It can charm at minus 4 and all of its victims are females. Human females killed by a lobishumen while under its charm become succubi. To defeat this creature, a foe must get it drunk, crucify it on a tree, then stab it with a stake through the heart.

Ekimmu (Assyria): Invisible even while it attacks, this vampire can charm at minus 1. It can also *Magic jar* its victim. To exorcise the vampire in this state, a clerical *Dispel evil* is needed, with a 50% chance of success when the cleric is of the same level as the ekimmu's hit dice, plus or minus 5% per level difference. To defeat this creature, subdue it with magic weapons long enough for it to be killed with a wooden sword.

Blautsauger (Bosnia-Herzegovina): Hairy, with no skeleton and large eyes, this vampire can polymorph itself into a rat or a

Vampires: Types and characteristics	Type	Move	Usual location	No. attacks	Damage/attack
	Common	12/18	anywhere	1	1-10 + 2 levels
	Asanbosam	12/0	jungle, plains	1 bite, 2 claws	1-6, 1-8, 1-10 + 2 levels according to size (bite); 1-4 (claw)
	Burcolakas	12/18	mountains	1	1-10 + 2 levels
	Catacano	12/18	mountains	1 spit, 1 bite	1-12 (spit); 1-10 +2 levels (bite)
	Lobishumen	15/0	jungle	1	1-10 + 2 levels
	Ekimmu	12/18	desert	1	1-10 + 2 levels
	Blautsauger	12/18	mountains, forest	1	1-10 + 2 levels
	Mulo	12/18	mountains, forest	1	1-6, 1-8, 1-10 + 2 levels according to size
	Alp	0/24	forest, plain	1	2 life levels
	Anananngel	0/24	jungle	1	1-12 + 2 levels
	Krvopijac	12/18	mountains, forest	1	1-10 + 2 levels
	Ch'ing-Shih	12	anywhere	1 bite, 2 claws	1-10 + 2 levels (bite); 1-8 (claw)
	Vlkodlak	12/18	mountains, forest	1	1-10 + 2 levels
	Bruxsa	12/18	anywhere	1	1-10 + 2 levels
	Nosferat	12/18	mountains, forest	1	1-10 + 2 levels

wolf. it charms at minus 3 and only turns victims into vampires by forcing them to eat earth from its grave. Those who do so become vampires when they die, even if they are not killed by the blautsager. Only a *Wish* avoids this. Those who die from the blautsager without eating the earth become spectres. To defeat the creature, burn its body or stab a stake through its heart.

Mulo (Serbia): These appear as men, women, and children wearing white clothes, love wine, and are active day and night. They can *polymorph* into either horses or sheep. A mulo kills by charming its victims (minus 2), then putting them into a large pot of boiling water. Blood draining by mulos puts the victim in suspended animation, awaiting the pot. To defeat a mulo, get it drunk and leave quickly; clerics may fight one to the death.

Alp (Saxony): A vampire appearing as a butterfly that attacks day and night, it settles on the chest of a victim and suffocates him. Each alp can call 10-100 ordinary butterflies and can throw one *Sleep* spell a day. To defeat one, find the corpse acting as recipient for the butterfly and put a lemon in its mouth. Without the lemon, destroying the body will force the alp to find another body, but will not kill it.

Anananngel (Philippines): This vampire appears as a flying head. It charms at minus 2 and can throw a *Fear* spell at minus 3. There is a 50% chance it is not undead, but a living witch. As such, it cannot be turned by a cleric. To defeat it, find the body where it sleeps during the day and hammer a stake through its heart. If splattered with blood from this vampire, a victim will have incapacitating sores and other afflictions that only a *Cure Disease* applied daily for 7 days will cure.

Krvopijac (Bulgaria): This creature has only one nostril; otherwise it looks like a common vampire. To find its grave, send a woman on a black foal through the suspected area. Where the foal refuses to go is where it is buried. To defeat it, chain it to its coffin with a rope of wildflowers (which may eventually break), or have a magic-user, holding a cross, order the vampire's soul into a bottle of blood and then throw it into a fire.

Ch'ing-Shih (China): This vampire has red, staring eyes, pointed nails like claws, long hair, greenish-white skin, but seems a very beautiful woman or handsome man. It can call 3-18 foxes. To defeat it, encircle it with rice.

Vlkodlak (Serbia): This has a congested face and blood-red skin and causes eclipses. Otherwise, it is like a common vampire. It is active day and night. To defeat it, cut off its toes and thumbs, drive a spike into its neck, pierce its navel (not heart) with a stake, then burn it, starting the fire with holy candles.

Bruxsa (Portugal): This vampire is a woman by day and a bird at night; it is active even in sunlight. Otherwise, it is like a common vampire and is defeated in the same fashion.

Nosferat (Rumania): It appears as a man or a beautiful woman, depending upon the sex of its victim. It can polymorph into a cat, a dog, a beetle, a butterfly, or straw. It can charm by touch, when in butterfly form or straw form, at minus 2. To defeat it, walk around its grave smoking pipeweed.

APRIL 1979 : #24

A LOOK AT LYCANTHROPY

by Jon Mattson

As described previously in the D&D® game and the *Blackmoor* supplement, any warm-blooded creature seriously injured by a lycanthrope (say, 50% or more of the possible damage he can take) stands a good chance of becoming one of the same type himself. There are, however, several varieties of lycanthropy which have not been covered and are listed below. Percentile dice are rolled when the person is first bitten to determine which type of lycanthrope he will become, with these results: 01-15 — A; 16-20 — B; 21-25 — C; 26-50 — D; 51-60 — E; 61-70 — F; 71-00 — G.

Type A — The infected character will turn into the type of creature which hit him from now on, both mentally and physically, until cured; i.e., he will be a new character — even his alignment will change to that of the creature which bit him. This change will occur within 1-8 days of being bitten and can only be cured with a *Cure Disease* or *Remove Curse* spell from a cleric at least one level above the creature that affected the player. The player will have all of the creature's regular abilities and limitations (i.e. if he changed to a were-rat he would be able to summon rats as usual), but none of his own abilities from before he was affected, as long as he is a lycanthrope.

Type B — The infected character will stay in human form but will have the lycanthrope's mentality from now on until cured. This change will occur within 3-36 turns and can be cured by a *Cure Disease* or *Remove Curse* spell from *any* cleric. The player will keep all of his physical attributes (i.e., if he had strength of 14 this would not change) but will have the lycanthrope's mental attributes and lower intelligence (he will not be able to cast spells, for instance, but can talk to other lycanthropes). For more information on the lower intelligence, see the section below on determination of attributes and abilities. Note that this type of lycanthropy is extremely rare and is also a type of insanity which can be used for curses, *Scarabs of Insanity*, etc.

Lycanthropes: *Player/creature alignment*

Creature's alignment	Player's alignment	Player/creature will be lawful:	neutral:	chaotic:
lawful	lawful	100%	—	—
lawful	neutral	60%	40%	—
lawful	chaotic	20%	60%	20%
neutral	lawful	45%	55%	—
neutral	neutral	—	100%	—
neutral	chaotic	—	55%	45%
chaotic	lawful	20%	60%	20%
chaotic	neutral	—	40%	60%
chaotic	chaotic	—	—	100%

Type C — The infected character will keep his own mentality but will gain the physical characteristics of the lycanthrope which bit him. This change will occur within 2-24 turns of being infected and can only be cured by a *Cure Disease* or *Remove Curse* spell from a cleric of at least seventh level. The character will keep his mental attributes (intelligence, wisdom, languages, and any spells which do not involve body gestures, etc.) but he will have the hit dice, armor class, strength, dexterity, and other physical attributes of the lycanthrope that bit him.

Type D — This is the same as Type A, but, beginning 1-12 turns after being infected, the player only changes to his lycanthrope form under a full moon or under great stress (see description of Type G for examples of stress).

Type E — This is the same as Type B, but beginning 2-16 turns after being infected, the player only has the lycanthrope's mentality under a full moon or under great stress.

Type F — This is the same as Type C, but, beginning 2-16 turns after being infected, the player only has the lycanthrope's physical form under a full moon or under great stress.

Type G — One of the most common, yet least understood, types of lycanthropy: Under a full moon or in situations of great stress (beginning 1-10 turns after being bitten), the infected character *may* (95% chance under full moon, base 40% chance under stress; add or subtract to this according to type of stress) change to a sort of part-man, part-monster being. Note that stress could be any situation where the character is in great danger or extremely frustrated and angry. This could be caused by anything from trying to pull his comrades out of a pit before they get eaten by a monster to fighting a seemingly invulnerable enemy or losing a battle. This may sound something like what happens to the Incredible Hulk, and that is the general idea.

In any case, this being will be (at least mentally) something like the original character, with the following provisions and variations.

The creature's alignment may be different. Compare a lycanthrope type's usual alignment to that of the character and cross-index them on the accompanying chart to see what alignment the creature will end up being.

Alignment must be discovered the first time the character changes to his lycanthrope form, and it will always remain the same unless the character (in non-lycanthrope form) changes his alignment, in which case a new roll is made.

The creature/character will have about half of the character's normal abilities (spells, languages, etc. providing its lower intelligence will permit this) and about half of the real lycanthrope's powers (so a were-rat of this type could summon 5-50 rats, not 10-100).

Players may feel that being a Type G lycanthrope is actually an advantage, as long as the creature's alignment is the same as the character's, since the creature is stronger and has more hit points. If a character wishes to be cured of this condition, advantages or no advantages, a *Cure Disease* or *Remove Curse* from a cleric of at least eighth level will do the trick.

Note: For Types D, E, F, and G, each time the character turns into a lycanthrope he will stay in this form for 2-12 turns or until the source of stress (or the full moon) is gone (whichever comes last).

Abilities and attributes

A separate character sheet will have to be made and used in conjunction with the character's regular sheet when he is in lycanthrope form. The character's basic attributes and ability scores will remain the same, with exceptions depending on the creature type (see chart on following page).

Note: Many readers may find it strange that a wolf's constitution would be better than a bear's, but remember that wolves survive severe hardships like cold and hunger, and I've yet to see a bear do as well. If it seems odd for a bear to have as much

Lycanthropes: *Attributes and abilities*

Type	INT	STR	CON	WIS	CHA	DEX	Speed	Hit points
Rat	—	—	+1	—	-3	+4	+10%	—
Wolf	-1	+2	+5	-2	-3	+3	+40%	+2 points to each hit die
Boar	-4	+4	+3	-4	-5	+1	+20%	+4 points to each hit die
Tiger	-3	+5	+4	-3	-4	+2	+40%	+5 points to each hit die
Bear	-1	+6	+4	-1	-2	—	+30%	+6 points to each hit die

Players reaching maximum level titles (i.e., Lord, Wizard) gain only one third of these HP adds. Round fractions up.

Saving throw matrix

Type	Death ray or poison	wands	Stone	Dragon breath	Staves & Spells
Rat	-1	+1	-1	—	—
Wolf	-3	—	-2	-2	—
Boar	-2	+1	-2	-1	+1
Tiger	-2	+1	-2	-2	—
Bear	-2	—	-1	-2	-1

Numbers are added to or subtracted from the amount needed to save from each category, not the number the player rolls (i.e., if a player needed 12 to save vs. poison, but was in were-wolf form, only a 9 would be needed.

intelligence as a wolf and more than any other animal — this is where fantasy and artistic license come in. I use were-bears (the only lycanthrope that is ever lawful good) as somewhat magical, intelligent creatures in my campaigns, usually as the servants/companions of good Wizards and Patriarchs.

Besides changes in ability, other attributes can change when a character assumes lycanthrope form.

Other changes

Armor class: This will be the same as the armor class listed for the creature type in the D&D rules. Note that a character will experience an odd sensation just before turning into a lycanthrope, so he will have time to take off any armor he is wearing to keep it from getting wrecked (since a creature like a were-bear is obviously bigger than a man). Optional: A character with a shield, has a 10% chance of keeping it when changing to lycanthrope form (providing the lycanthrope has front limbs that can hold it; only were-rats, were-bears, and Type G lycanthrope qualify). In such a case, the character/creature's armor class would be one better than usual. Its level and experience will be the same as that of the character. And, the creature goes up in the same steps as the character (i.e., a magic-user/lycanthrope goes up in steps of 5 for saving throws, etc.)

Supplies and possessions: There is a base 65% chance that the lycanthrope will drop all supplies and possessions the character was carrying when it first changes (40% chance if Type G and 0% if Type C or F). Otherwise, the character/creature will keep all of the character's supplies and possessions.

Languages: The creature automatically speaks its own language (were-bear, were-rat, etc.) and any other languages (which its improved intelligence may allow) the character/creature desires to know.

JUNE 1979: #26

BLUEPRINT FOR A LICH

by Lenard Lakofka

Liches are high-level clerics or magic-users who have become very special undead. Before becoming a lich, the cleric or magic-user must have been at least 14th level in life, although 18th level is most common. Once a lich is created, it might drop in level, but below 10th level one cannot exist.

Preparation for lichdom occurs while the figure is still alive and must be completed before his first "death." If he dies somewhere along the line and is resurrected, then he must start all over again.

The would-be lich needs these spells: *Magic Jar, Trap the Soul,* and *Enchant an Item,* plus a special potion and something to "jar" into.

The item into which the lich will "jar" is prepared by having *Enchant an Item* cast upon it. The item cannot be of the common variety, but must be of high quality, solid, and of at least 2,000gp in value. The item must make a saving throw as if it were the person casting the spell. (A cleric would have to have the spells *Enchant an Item* and *Magic Jar* cast for him, and it is the contracted magic-user's level that would be used for the saving throw.) The item can contain prior magics, but wooden items are not acceptable.

If the item is then soul-receptive, the prepared candidate for lichdom will cast (or have cast) *Magic Jar* on it and enter the item. As soon as he enters the jar he will lose a level — and the corresponding hit points — at once. The hit points and his soul are now stored in the jar. He then must return to his own body and must rest for 2-7 days. The ordeal is so demanding that his top three levels of spells are erased and will not come back (through reading/prayer) until the rest period is over.

The next time the character dies, regardless of circumstances, he will go into the jar, no matter how far away and no matter what the obstacles (including *Cubes of Force, Prismatic Spheres,* lead boxes, etc.). To get out again, the magic-user/cleric must have his (or another's) recently dead body within 90 feet of the jar. The body can be that of any recently killed creature, from a mouse to a ki-rin. The corpse must *fail* its saving throw vs. magic to be possessed. The saving throw is that of a one-half hit die figure for a normal man, animal, small monster, etc., regardless of alignment, if the figure had three or fewer hit dice in life. If it had four or more hit dice, it gains one of the following saving throws, according to alignment: lawful good, chaotic good or neutral good — normal saving throw as in life; lawful neutral, chaotic neutral or true neutral — saving throw as in life, but at -3; lawful evil — saving throw at -4; neutral evil — saving throw at -5; and chaotic evil — saving throw at -6. The corpse can be dead no longer than 30 days. If it makes its saving throw, it will never receive the lich. The magic-user/cleric's own corpse can be dead any length of time and is at -10 to receive him. He may attempt to enter his own corpse once each week until he succeeds.

If the lich enters another's corpse, he will have the limited abilities of the corpse when it comes to physical strength. Intelligence and wisdom will be his own, regardless of what the corpse had. It can have no more than four hit dice, and will behave as a wight, but has no energy-draining ability. If the corpse could cast spells in life, then the possessed corpse may also do so — up to, but not beyond, the 4th level of spell ability. The wightish body will have telepathic abilities if the body it came from could speak when it was alive.

In the wightish body, the lich will seek his own body and transport it to the location of the jar. Destruction of his own body is possible only via the spell *Disintegrate*, and the body gets a normal saving throw vs. the spell. Dismemberment or burning of the body will not destroy it; the remains of the corpse will radiate an unlimited range *Locate Object* spell. Naturally, it may be difficult for the lich to obtain all these pieces/ashes, but that is another story. If and when the wightish body finds the remains of the lich's original body, it will eat them and after one week will metamorphose into a humanoid body similar to the lich's original body. Once the lich is back in his own body he will have the spells he had in life and never has to read/pray for them again. In fact he cannot, except once to "fill up" his spell levels. As a lich, he can never gain levels, use scrolls, or use magic items that require the touch of a living being.

Each time the lich returns his life force to the jar, it always costs him a level. When he drops to 10th level, any subsequent return to the jar destroys the lich. The lich will try to teleport back to the jar, however, before he is "killed" (that is, before he goes to zero hit points). If he does go to zero points, he is destroyed forever! If he has the spell *Teleport*, the lich can transport his body, also, but just his "life force" goes back into the jar. (He does not, however, need the spell *Teleport* to get just his life force back to the jar, although if he loses his body in this manner, he must start the search for it all over again.)

If his body is disintegrated then the lich can only be a wight-ish body unless he can find someone to cast a *Wish* for him to get the body back together again. The jar must be on the Prime Material, the Negative Material, or the Positive Material Plane and of course he must have a means of gaining access to the appropriate plane in the first place.

A living person will never radiate anything that will indicate he is prepared for lichdom. No *Charm* will ever make him tell this fact or where his jar is hidden! However, a *Charm* can make him tell *what* the jar is. In like manner, *Locate an Object* will not find a lich's jar unless a deity-rank figure is willing to cast the spell and its range is limited to 100 miles in only one plane!

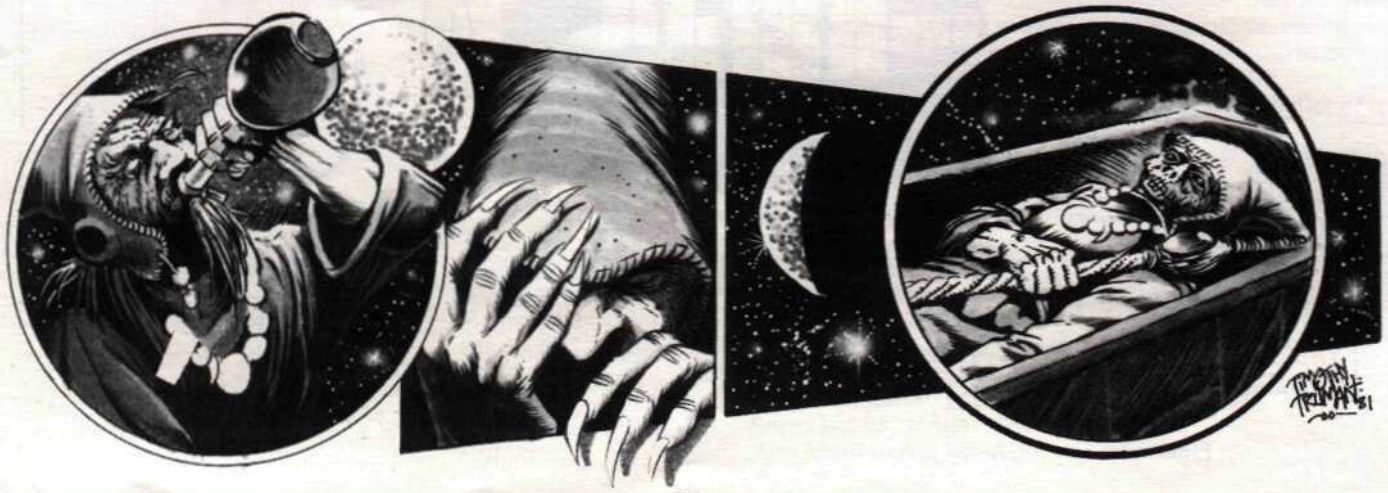
The lich must find a means of continual access if he places his jar on another plane. Hirelings can be charmed (paid) to keep a supply of dead (less than 30 days) bodies at his disposal, but that is risky. A jar hidden too well may never offer a corpse for him to enter. A lich may elect to commit suicide to save himself a lot of trouble later on.

Preparing the body of the living figure is done via a potion. The potion is difficult to make and very time-consuming. It requires these items:

2 pinches of pure arsenic
1 pinch of belladonna
1 measure of fresh phase spider venom (less than 30 days old)
1 measure of fresh wyvern venom (less than 60 days old)
The blood of a humanoid killed by a phase spider
The blood of a humanoid killed by a mixture of arsenic and belladonna
The heart of a humanoid killed by wyvern venom
1 quart of blood from a vampire or a person infected with vampirism
The ground-up reproductive glands of 7 giant moths (dead for less than 60 days)

The items are mixed in the order given by the light of a full moon. When the figure drinks the potion (all of it at once), the following things may occur:

01-10	No effect whatsoever, other than all body hair falling out; start over!
11-40	Fall into coma for 2-7 days. The potion works.
41-70	Feebleminded until dispelled by *Dispel Magic*. Each attempt to remove the feeblemind has a 10% chance to kill instead if it fails. The potion works.
71-90	Paralyzed for 4-14 days. 30% chance that permanent loss of 1-6 dexterity points will result. The potion works.
91-96	Permanently deaf, dumb or blind. Only a *Wish* can regain the sense. The potion works.
97-00	Dead. Start over ... if you can be resurrected.



AUG. 1978: #17

TESSERACTS

by Gary Jordan

A tesseract, as everyone (or at least readers of Robert A. Heinlein) knows, is a four-dimensional cube or "hypercube," which is a cube extended in a direction simultaneously perpendicular to all three of its axes so that each cube of a tesseract shares a common side and four common edges with each cube adjacent to it — *and with each cube immediately adjacent to the adjacent cube.*

Confused? Wondering what in the name of Anubis this has to do with a D&D® game and mapmaking? All will be made clear, at least as clear as is necessary to make use of the idea. (Most Americans don't completely understand the internal combustion engine, but we keep right on driving cars anyway.)

The tesseract is a mathematical abstraction whose math escapes my high school algebra but whose properties are known and easily applied and adaptable to a D&D or AD&D™ adventure. Look at Figure 1. Bear in mind that each of the shapes shown is in fact a perfect square, which is meant to represent a floor plan of a cubical room. Therefore we have a central room (C), an eastern room (E), a southern room (S), a western room (W), a northern room (N), and another room we'll call the frame room (F). Not shown are the upper room (U) and lower room (L), which border the top and bottom of the central room.

Going by the principle stated at the end of the first paragraph above, we can see that since E is adjacent to C, it must share a wall with N and a wall with S. As represented, each room does the same thing with adjacent rooms. Now for the mind-boggler: Room F. This room is adjacent to E; the rooms immediately adjacent to E are N and S; therefore, F shares a wall with N and a wall with S. But sharing a wall makes the rooms adjacent, and W is adjacent to both N and S, so F must share its fourth and final wall with W, which means that room F is the room outside the square formed by the outer walls of E, N, W, and S....

Never mind. For purposes of the game, all a DM need do is make some notation (such as exhibited in Figure 2) and keep a separate map (such as Figure 3) which gives him the basic floor plan of his tesseract. The arrows show the relationships of the walls well enough and still allow the DM to furnish the rooms in the proper dimensions. This floor plan also shows the rooms directly above and below the central room, to which some access should be planned. These two rooms present some interesting problems which will be elaborated upon later. For now, let's look at the basic plan. Suppose a party meanders down one of the corridors shown in Figure 2. After checking for traps, listening at the door, etc. the party enters room C. (This is always the room which occupies the square shown in Figure 2.)

So long as any door remains open, the tesseract is not activated. Opening another door while the first one remains open will allow the party to pass through room C as though the tesseract didn't exist. If all four doors are closed at the same

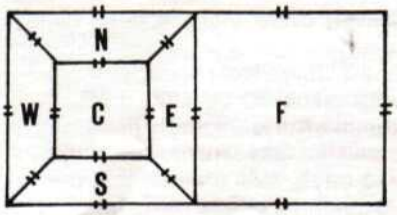


Figure 1

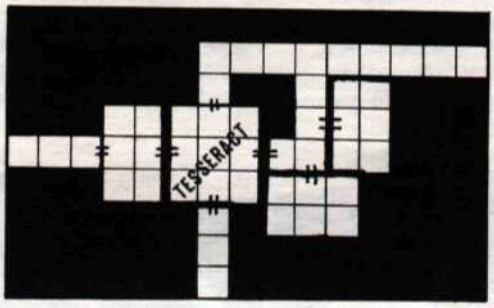


Figure 2

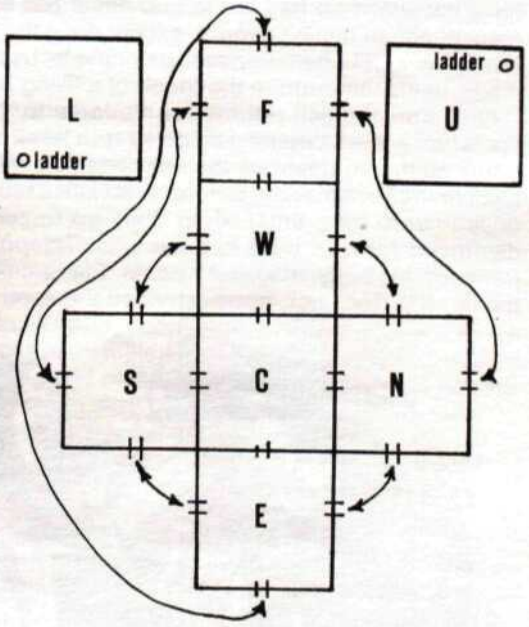


Figure 3

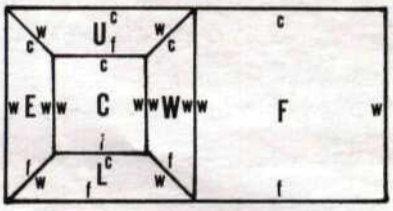


Figure 4

time, no matter how briefly, each door will thereafter lead to an adjacent room of the tesseract.

Of course, some method should be provided for eventual escape — perhaps a magical item, such as a ring or bracelet which will allow the wearer and those around him to pass through one of the doors of room C into the three-dimensional dungeon beyond. Such a device would be usable only in this tesseract, naturally. The more cruel DM's amongst us would no doubt leave out such frills, forcing the hapless party to rely on *Teleport* spells, wishes, *Knock* spells (if anyone would ever conceive of using one on a door which opens easily — to another room of the tesseract, that is), or similar means. Note that a *Dispel magic* spell would cause every room except C to instantly disappear, along with anyone or anything in them.

As previously mentioned, rooms U and L present peculiar problems. Looking at Figure 4, a side view of the tesseract with "w" standing for wall, "c" for ceiling and "f" for floor, an anomaly may become apparent; if one enters F by climbing through the ceiling of U, one finds oneself climbing through the ceiling of F upside down! And of course the corollary holds true for room L.

Unless you're the type of DM who delights in having people fall on their heads, it is highly recommended that you not bother to design in an access between L or U and F. (Nor between L or U and any other room except C, since L's walls are E's, N's, W's, and S's floors, and U's walls are their ceilings.) The tesseract is complex enough without adding these unnecessary frills.

Now that the basics have been established, draw one up and play it solo, populating it as your whims dictate, just to get the feel of it. Get used to saying left and right instead of north, west, etc., since you've seen that a straight line can take you in all four directions in a matter of four rooms.

I first designed this fiendish set of rooms nearly a year ago, after a close encounter with a member of that semi-intelligent species of player, *papyriosus meticulosus*, whose habits are well known: To wit, they must have every detail of a dungeon set to parchment — every nook, crack, cranny, or stain. I wasn't the DM; I was one of the bored players whose time he was wasting. After careful consultation, the DM included a tesseract in his dungeon. I learned a valuable lesson (never call on Thor in a moment of weakness), and the mapmaker should be out of the sanitarium early next year.

JUNE 1980: #38

Which Way Is Up?

WELL, IT ALL DEPENDS...

TESSERACTS

by Allen Wells

There was an interesting article about the use of tesseracts in a D&D® game in a previous issue of DRAGON™ magazine. The article was very good, as far as it went, but there are many more possibilities to be explored concerning tesseracts.

A fairly thorough description of a tesseract is necessary at first, for readers to understand the rest of the article. If you think you already understand tesseracts, you may just skim this section and look at the diagrams on the following two pages.

There are two ways of showing a cube in two dimensions. Unfolding the cube and showing how to put it back together again (Figure 1), or showing what its "projection" or "shadow" into two-dimensional space looks like (Figure 2). Similarly, there are two ways to show a tesseract in three dimensions.

The first way to show a tesseract is to "unfold" it. Compare Figure 1 to Figure 3. In Figure 1 (unfolding a cube) the two lines labeled "a" connect to each other in such a way that the dots connect. Note that 1A, 1B, and 1C will all give you the same cube if you cut them out and fold them into cubes. In Figure 3 (unfolding a tesseract), the two faces of cubes labeled "a" connect to each other in such a way that the dots connect. Since these faces are really connected, you can redraw the tesseract as in 3B, where the cubes have been "rolled" up the tesseract. They could have been rolled again (so that "e" and "d" surfaces match).

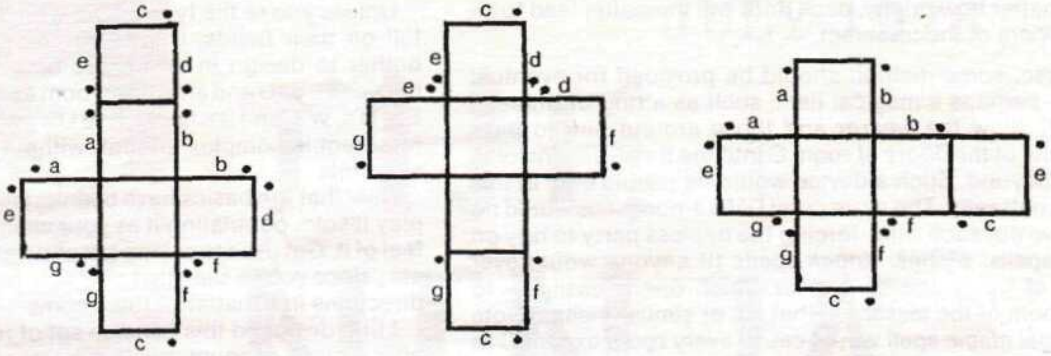
Now that we can see how the "d" faces match, we can move the top cube to match the side cube (transition from 3A to 3C). Note the orientation of the dot on face "e." So 3A, 3B, and 3C would all give you the same tesseract if you could cut them out and fold them into tesseracts. Try to imagine other ways you could restructure the tesseract. (Note: The top face of the top cube and the bottom face of the bottom cube connect in figures 3A and 3B.)

The other way to show a tesseract is to show its projection. Compare Figure 2 to Figure 4. The tesseract projection shows the relation between the cube faces better, but at the cost of distorting the cubes — just like the cube projection shows the relation between the edges of a cube better, but at the cost of distorting some of the faces. Figures 2A and 4A have the non-distorted faces and cubes in bold. Figures 2B and 4B emphasize some of the distorted faces and cubes. Note how the distorted faces look like parallelograms and the distorted cubes look like pyramids with the tops cut off.

Look at both of these representations and try to imagine moving from one cube to another. Up does not always remain up! Some people will find the unfolding more understandable, some the projection. Use whichever one you find easier.

Now we can begin to explore the possibilities of a tesseract.

Figure 1



Start out by mapping out your dungeon, either using Figure 3A and showing how all the faces connect, or 4A. In either case, you have to keep track of what cube you are mapping in and what surface in that cube is the floor.

This brings up the first problem: Which way *is* down?? My answer is, *Down is the way your feet are pointing!!!* (No, this doesn't mean that if you turn your feet, you turn "down.") When you open a door, "down" will still be "down" in the next room! This means that gravity is a property of you and your possessions, not of the room, and it is possible to have two people in the same room who think a different "wall" is the "floor."

As an example, consider Figure 3. Let us say that an intrepid group of adventurers starts in the bottom cube in Figure 3A. Athmar goes upstairs into the cube in the center (which cannot be seen in the diagram) and goes through a door toward us into the cube that shows face "e" nearest the reader. He is now standing on face "g" (see 3B). Mythner, who stayed behind in the "bottom" cube, decides to go adventuring on his own into the same cube by taking a door through face "g," and is now standing on face "e." They are both in the same room, but *they each think that a different way is up!* This leads to an interesting fact: Although there are only 8 rooms in a tesseract, there are 8×6 = 48 different floors! Each floor is essentially a different room since you can't necessarily get to something just by being in the same room as it is.

Now the fun begins. You can tantalize a party by putting a chest of pearls on the ceiling, and they have to figure out how to maneuver through the tesseract to turn the ceiling into a floor! Imagine the battles between parties standing on different walls.... Or, how about flights of arrows coming down from a party on the ceiling, while they cannot be reached with swords! The same stairway can be going up or down depending on the way you are standing on it! Shades of Escher!!

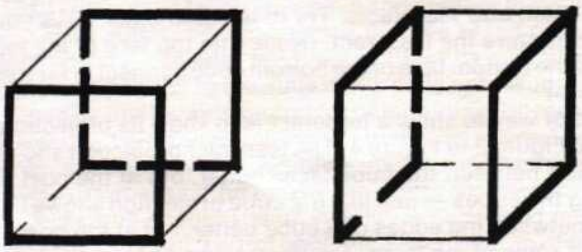
Another interesting effect is that not only is gravity a property of people, but of possessions as well. Let's imagine that the adventurers meet a party of monsters in a corner and that the monsters are standing on a different wall. Let's say that the monsters are defeated and the leader has a magic sword. Thandatir picks up the sword from the wall and finds that it is unusable, because gravity is pulling it to the side instead of toward the ground. If he wants to use it, he either has to get it out of the tesseract the way it is or have someone guard the sword while he races around the tesseract, trying to come into the room so that down for him is the same as down for the sword — and we all know that splitting up a party is a risky proposition in any event.

Of course, the party could use this phenomenon to their advantage. Let's say that Thanatos boosts Terah up on his shoulders. Terah grabs hold of a chair on the ceiling that weighs less than he does and pulls it down to his "floor." This chair could then be used as a "balloon" by tying it to a heavy chest and having the weight of the chair pulling up offset some of the weight of the chest pulling down.

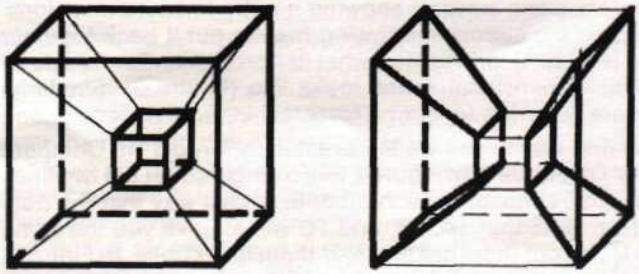
The next problem for the DM is an architectural one. Obviously, the rooms have to be cubical, but where should doors, stairs, and ladders be, and how big should the rooms be?

The major consideration is good connectivity. Since you presumably want the party to have access to every wall as a floor (although maybe you do not...), you might want a stairway or ladder to the ceiling, doors on all walls, and a trap door on

Figure 2

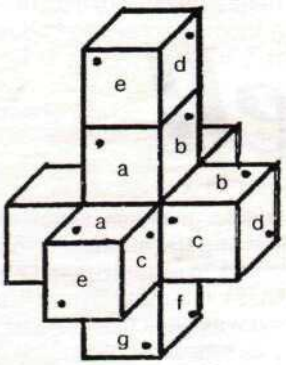


2A 2B

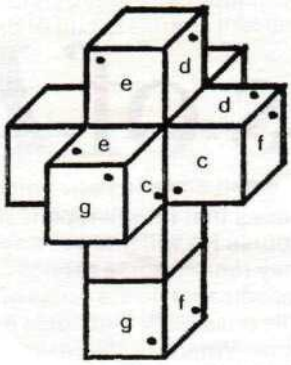


4A 4B

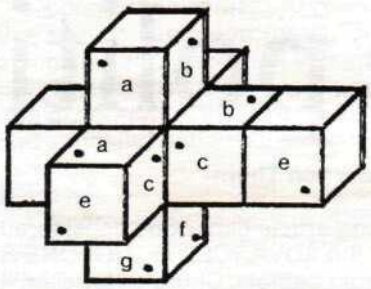
Figure 4



3A



3B



3C

Figure 3

every ceiling and floor. Note that you have to be able to get up and down somewhere, otherwise you will never be able to turn a ceiling into a wall. Also note that if you want complete connectivity, this means a ladder or stairway from every floor to the appropriate ceiling. As far as I can see, there are three answers.

The first possibility is to have small rooms (about 8'×8'×8'), so that you can climb through any trap door in the ceiling and then safely drop to the floor of the room below. Unfortunately, such rooms are little more than closets.

The second possibility is to have large rooms (20'×20'×20' and up) and have four doors in each wall, one on each side (Figure 5A). In the center of each floor you have a spiral stairway/elevator/ladder/whatever for going up and down.

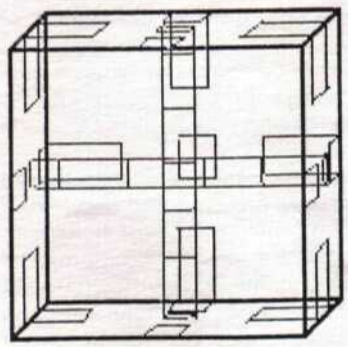
The third, and to me the most interesting, possibility is to have large rooms and only one square door in the center of each wall. There is a stairway leading down from every door to the door of every adjacent "floor." If Norman wants to get to the next room, he climbs a flight of stairs to the door, goes through, and climbs down another flight of stairs to the floor. Note that each stairway can be used by people in two different orientations. But how does Norman go up or down?

There are two possibilities. The easiest is he climbs up to the door in the middle of a wall (any wall), then climbs onto the back of the stairway leading from that wall to the ceiling (Figure 5B). If the stairway is just a flight of steps in the air, the back of the stairway is another stairway! When he gets to the ceiling, he climbs back around and goes through the door in the ceiling (presumably there is a platform provided for this). Another, more complicated, way is to have tubes rather than plain stairways leading from door to door, then have another stairway functioning as the "ceiling" of each stairway (Figure 5C). This may be less esthetic, but allows more battles within stairways.

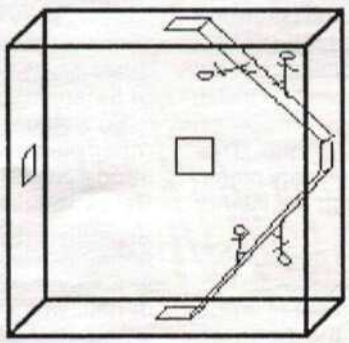
The last problem is how to get in and out of a tesseract. Mathematically, this is no problem at all, since each cube of the tesseract borders on the outside as well as on other cubes, just like the faces of a cube border on the outside as well as on other faces of the cube. In reality, there are other considerations. People are not four-dimensional, so presumably they can go one and only one way through every door. Getting the party in is no problem, but how should they get out? If they are very high-level, you may make them rely on a *Wish* or a *Teleport* spell. For lower-level parties, you might want to have magical helms or rings that will take one out to the real world if he leaves the right door in the right orientation, or perhaps you might want something as pedestrian as a lever on the wall. Whatever it is, you probably want the exit to be a different door than the entrance (or at least in a different orientation; you don't want to make things too easy), but you should somehow mark it, or have a map to it, or have some of the monsters tell where it is if they are questioned and suitably paid, because there are 48 different doors with six different orientations for each (up and down count, too) which amounts to 288 different possibilities!

To all you fellow Dungeon Masters, have fun! I'm planning to. To all you intrepid adventurers, beware! Go read Heinlein's *And He Built A Crooked House* and get a copy of *Escher's Relativity*, because you never know when your DM may have things other than carrion crawlers attacking from the ceiling.

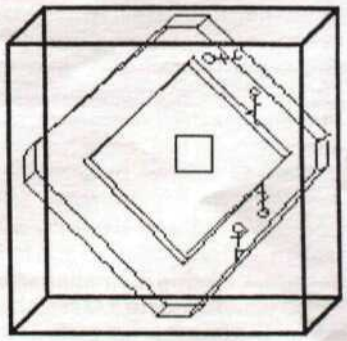
Figure 5



5A



5B



5C

AUG. 1979: #28

The politics of *Hell*

by Alexander von Thorn

(Author's note: The following article cannot be considered the official doctrine of either the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game or the Roman Catholic Church. However, it is compatible with the AD&D® rules, and except for the parts about Asmodeus it is not in conflict with works on demonology as generally accepted by Catholic exorcists, thus enjoying tacit approval by the Church. However, this article does not have a *nihil obstat*: Much of it is original, and it approaches the subject from a different angle than a religious tract would, and should not be considered as such. The rise of Asmodeus is not documented in any major text on demonology, but very little original work on the subject has been done since the Middle Ages, so it is possible that the situation has changed. Perhaps Mr. Gygax has more accurate sources of information...)

Once upon a time, there were no devils. Only God and the angels were in heaven. (The term God is used to refer to the Creator of the Universe. He is called Yahweh by some, Allah by others, and is known by many other names.) The most powerful, most intelligent, and most beautiful of all the angels was called Satan. He was given these traits by God in order to carry out the most arduous task among all the angels — that of testing the merit of mortal men.

Satan used temptation and suffering to try to get men to choose evil instead of good. He usually succeeded in his work, because most men had something (or someone) which they held near and dear, over and above considerations of ethics, and so Satan came to hold the majority of mankind in contempt.

Satan was not happy in his work, because he had to cause the downfall of many men who otherwise would have led relatively blameless lives. Sometimes he had to cause great suffering in the lives of good men, like Job, which he didn't like to do, either. Job had done nothing to deserve the problems that Satan gave him, and Satan came to feel sorry for Job and those like him.

Satan felt that God was being unfair. In coming to the conclusion, he valued his own judgement above the wisdom of God. His thinking gradually came around to the idea that there were better ways of organizing the universe than the way God had set it up. He came to think that he could do a better job than God. Satan discussed his ideas with other angels, and many agreed that he had some valid points.

Eventually, Satan challenged God, and many angels supported him. But God and his supporters were victorious, and Satan and his supporters were sentenced to hell for all eternity unless they repented their sins. Satan responded, "Better to rule in hell than to serve in heaven!" With that, he passed to hell in a brilliant flash, and from that time on his followers, human and supernatural, gave him the name of Lucifer, "Prince of Light," and the star of the morning was named for him. The French claim that when Satan passed through the earthly plane en route from heaven to hell, he went down through the island of Mont St. Michel, off the coast of Brittany.

Some scholars theorize that the influence of the devils, who were now actively working against God and good, was the reason that God sent his son to Earth, although that belief is not universal among Christians. However, parts of the Book of Isaiah which refer to a Messiah are thought to have been written during the Babylonian exile of the Jews, which happened shortly after the fall of the devils (at least as far as this writer can figure out). It is also said that God misses Satan, and that He hopes that he will repent and ask God's forgiveness, which of course He will grant to any of the fallen angels (although God may require some service to be performed, in order to test their rededication to the cause of righteousness. It is thought that it is this possibility that holds many of the devils back from repentance. Whatever the reason, no devil has ever repented).

And so, Satan became the lord of hell. All the devils worked for the damnation of men and the promulgation of evil and suffering. Satan found it ridiculously easy to accomplish anything he wanted, using his talents of temptation and suffering. The mere threat of his immense power kept the other devils in line. A group of humans who were obsessed by power, or evil, or both, developed a cult around Satan, and they set up a tight hierarchy in order to pursue their goals through evil. Even some of the illiterate peasants occasionally said a prayer to Satan when God didn't seem to answer their prayers.

The forces of evil were strong, and flourished in the ignorance of the Dark Ages. Satan schemed and plotted, for he believed that he had simply been outmaneuvered by the forces of good because he had failed to plan his first assault properly. He felt that if he took the time to develop a strategy, to take advantage of his own strengths and minimize his forces' weaknesses, while capitalizing on the weaknesses and neutralizing the strengths of the enemy, then he had a good shot at winning the final conflict.

But Satan was an arbitrary ruler. He took it for granted that all the fallen angels would follow him without question. However, some of the other devils were also proud, and they did not agree with all the orders Satan gave, just as they had (like Satan) disagreed with God. Beelzebub, in particular, felt that he and the other devils should have more of a free hand in encouraging acts of evil, and more of a say in matters of general policy in hell. Beelzebub discussed this with the other important devils — Adramelech, Astaroth, Moloch, Nergal, Amaimon, Belphegor, and many others — and most agreed with Beelzebub, after promises of more power and freedom under a new order. The others were noncommittal, for they were afraid of the wrath of Satan and would not speak against Satan even in private, although they did not reveal Beelzebub's plan to Satan. Those devils who supported Beelzebub would once in a while question a minor order from Satan, or neglect to perform a trivial task. When these rebels were discovered, Satan sent Belial, his personal lieutenant, to deal with them. Belial became hated by the other devils and at the same time grew in the esteem of Satan.

Eventually, Beelzebub challenged Satan, and when it was seen that more of the powerful devils supported Beelzebub, the other devils flocked to his cause, leaving only Belial on the side of Satan.

So Satan and Belial became exiles from hell, forced to find other places within the multiverse to hide out and make their abode, while Beelzebub became the new lord of hell. With Belial gone, Moloch became the new supreme commander of the armies of hell, and Asmodeus became the devil in charge of politicians and bureaucrats, while Adramelech became second in the overall hierarchy after Beelzebub, serving as chancellor of hell, which was the equivalent of a prime minister of a government of which Beelzebub was the president or king.

However, the armies of hell remained secretly loyal to Belial, and they helped him whenever they had the opportunity to do so without being caught. Also, Belial kept his old contacts, and retained a great deal of his influence with politicians and bu-

reaucrats for some time. Satan, for his part, remained very powerful, because the covens remained faithful to him. In fact, most people (including the majority of the clergy) were not aware of the change in the leadership of hell. To this day, when people think of "The Devil," they think of Satan, and if the name of any devil is mentioned in a Catholic sacramental ritual, it is his (e.g., when the celebrant asks, "Do you reject Satan?" etc.).

Of course, the exorcists and demonologists knew about the change, and after the fall of Satan his name was left out of the hierarchies compiled by them. The time of this event is not certain, but evidence suggests that it probably occcurred at about the time of the Renaissance. Indeed, it may have been partially responsible for the Renaissance, because Satan had tried to keep mankind steeped in mystery and ignorance, while Beelzebub thought that new areas of knowledge could lead to new forms of evil. During the Middle Ages, warfare had been a very personal affair. Lords battled over matters of vengeance, or family honor, or simple greed. They were followed by loyal men-at-arms and their bows, and everyone went home at harvest time. Then came the rise of national empires, and men were drafted into armies in the names of kings they'd never seen, to fight with guns and cannons over matters of politics, or religion, or just strategic objectives. Arbitrary and capricious monarchs gave way to systematic dictatorships of terror. Ignorance and superstition were replaced by science and technology totally devoid of morality. Of course, things were not so bad in every respect, but Beelzebub does seem to have made his point.

However, Beelzebub had difficulty controlling the devils. He could not order them about the way Satan had, because he had gained power by promising more freedom of action. In fact, some of the more powerful arch-devils told him (in a roundabout way) that his authority would be in jeopardy if he tried to assert himself too much. So, the only means that Beelzebub could use to get things done in hell were by persuasion or by doing favors for the devils. Needless to say, these were not enough, even if Beelzebub had had the time to talk to all the arch-devils in order to explain why things had to be done, or to do all the errands that he had to do to get things done. The devils ended up aiding humans against each other, with little coordination, so that they fell into disrepute because they could not fulfill their conflicting promises. Beelzebub's attempts to restore order were futile because the more powerful arch-devils would not agree with Beelzebub on how to resolve some of the more important conflicts. In fact, some of them preferred to let the situation deteriorate so that they could increase their personal power.

Also, the spirit of anticlericism and atheism that the devils had succeeded in creating worked against them; people rejected the idea of devils, writing them off as mere superstition, when they rejected the idea of a God.

Many devils were dissatisfied with the rule of Beelzebub, but there was no apparent successor. Astaroth, the next most powerful devil, was happy in his role as treasurer of hell, and he almost always achieved his objectives without needing the mantle of authority that came with being lord of hell. Adramelech was not a very personally strong devil, and he was rather ineffectual when things were as disorganized as they were. Dispater and Geryon were strong, but they lacked the necessary talents of leadership. Most of the other arch-devils were satisfied to increase their power at the expense of Beelzebub's, because they thought that the position of lord of hell was a thankless job, and that if someone with less sheer power than Beelzebub held the post, hell would be worse off than it already was.

However, one figure — Asmodeus, one of the lesser arch-devils — felt differently. He was like an administrative assistant to Amaimon, the devil in command of the largest of the four armies of hell. Asmodeus took care of non-military matters for Amaimon. He was also the devil in charge of politicians and bureaucrats, as noted previously, and with the rise of democracies in the 18th and 19th centuries, the influence of Asmodeus became even greater.

Asmodeus was a master of deception, and he had great skill in finding things out (especially concealed treasures), which were invaluable traits in dealing with politicians. Asmodeus was therefore well known in hell, and he was well informed on important matters in hell, but most devils saw him as a minor functionary in the upper echelons of hell. However, the skills of diplomacy and negotiation which he had developed in order to better help human politicians were very useful in hell, because of the disorganized, uncertain situation there. More and more often, Asmodeus found himself mediating disputes and helping to form a consensus among the devils on important policy matters. The devils came to respect his judgement, and set him to organizing some of the more important projects.

With this visible support to reinforce him, Asmodeus decided that his administrative skills were just what hell needed. So he approached some of the more powerful devils and suggested that he might make a better ruler than Beelzebub. Support for his plan in the upper echelon was lukewarm at first, so he sweetened the proposal by doing a number of one-shot favors, or promising to do something that individual devils especially wanted. After a while, many devils came to side with him, but a significant number still thought that Beelzebub's power was necessary to maintain any semblance of order in hell.

Asmodeus found a solution: He promised to keep Beelzebub in hell at the top of the hierarchy, second only to himself. The devils agreed to support him so long as they did not have to resort to violence, promising in return that they would, if necessary, refuse to obey Beelzebub's orders in a show of solidarity. Even Astaroth agreed that Asmodeus would probably be a more capable ruler.

With the support of the devils assured, Asmodeus revealed his plan to the lord. Asmodeus demanded that Beelzebub voluntarily reduce his personal strength in order to prevent any possible future challenges to his authority, and that he change

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his name from Beelzebub, meaning "Prince of Devils," to Baalzebul, meaning "Lord of the Flies" (i.e. little devils). The reason for that was so that the old rituals of power invoking the old name would not work. Beelzebub was enraged with that, and almost attacked Asmodeus, until Asmodeus told Beelzebub to see which side the other arch-devils, such as Astaroth, were on. Beelzebub hesitated, and then reconsidered his attack. He summoned Astaroth. Upon his arrival, Astaroth greeted them with, "Hello, Baalzebul. Hello, Lord Asmodeus." And with that, Beelzebub knew that he had been overthrown.

Thus it was that Asmodeus became lord of hell. Shortly thereafter, the "war to end all wars" was fought, and then came Mussolini and Hitler, the death camps and purges, the A-bomb and other atrocities in a war that claimed more than 15 million soldiers in battle and countless other lives. One could say that Asmodeus has known some success.

Through his politicking and playing one devil off against another, Asmodeus manages to keep a fairly tight rein on the activities of the devils. Baalzebul still secretly schemes to retake his former position, and there are a few other devils now who think that they could handle the leadership of hell, but none have yet dared to openly oppose the rule of Asmodeus.

Asmodeus has reorganized hell to suit his purposes. Satan had originally divided hell into nine distinct planes, in order to keep track of which damned soul went where. Asmodeus has dispensed with the old structuring and doled out the planes as sort of fiefdoms under his suzerainty. He kept the ninth plane as his personal demesne and granted the sixth and seventh to Baalzebul, out of respect for his previous service, making him the only devil to rule two entire planes personally. Dispater and Geryon were also granted entire planes because they were the first to support Asmodeus, and they have since been his most loyal followers. The other planes are divided among the other six dozen or so arch-devils. Astaroth was offered a plane, but he declined the responsibility.

Asmodeus has used his position to increase his personal strength to the point that he is now the most powerful devil to be found on the nine planes of hell. This is unheard of, but it was barely possible by the laws of the multiverse because the departure of Satan and Belial from hell and the reduction in strength that Baalzebul was forced to suffer left a slight imbalance in the multiverse which Asmodeus used to increase his own strength. And so, all the planes of hell are now securely under the dominion of Lord Asmodeus.

Satan ("The Prince of Darkness," "The Adversary," Lucifer, "The Prince of Light"): First among devils, Satan is a being feared by all. He can appear in any form he wishes, but the form he prefers is that of a normal man, having features which are most likely to engender trust and respect from the person he is dealing with. In places where he is master (which are rare these days, although becoming more common), he will appear in roughly humanoid form, about 7' tall, with horns, tail and pitchfork and having a deep red skin color, almost maroon, with a majestic countenance. He can move as fast as he wants to, and he can accurately teleport, cross dimensions or even travel through time if need be. In order to strike Satan with a weapon, the attacker would need a +3 weapon to hit him, and he would also have to have a clear conscience and an absolute determination to pursue one's objective, which of course must be of the purest motives. Anyone who dares to attack Satan psionically will automatically fall into his control forever (a *Wish* can recover an individual, but nothing less will do). Of course, Satan cannot be affected by a psionic attack, but he will not use normal psionic attack modes. Satan may use any spell or psionic discipline as often as he likes. He cast spells as if he was a 30th-level character, except for druidic spells, which he casts at 14th level of ability. He has an effective psionic ability of 500, although he does not actually use any points when employing psionic powers.

Satan also has the ability to alter fate, in order to cause a number of unfortunate events to happen to an individual, such as the death of friends and family and the ruin of business, career, property, social status, reputation and health, to start with. Fortunately, however, for the victim, if he remains resolute in the face of this suffering, the forces of good will eventually relieve his problems in order to maintain the balance of the multiverse, although the victim may not receive any compensation for the trouble he has gone through.

More Masters of Deviltry

	Satan
FREQUENCY	*Very rare*
NO. APPEARING	*1*
ARMOR CLASS	*-8*
MOVE	*Whatever desired*
HIT DICE	*333 hit points*
% IN LAIR	*5%*
TREASURE TYPE	*H(×2), I(×2), U(×2)*
NO. ATTACKS	*1*
DAMAGE/ATTACK	*10-100*
SPECIAL ATTACKS	*+3 or better weapon and purity of heart required to hit*
MAGIC RESISTANCE	*95%*
INTELLIGENCE	*Godlike*
ALIGNMENT	*Lawful evil*
SIZE	*Variable*
PSIONIC ABILITY	*Special*
Attack/Defense Modes	*Special*

Satan's main ability is the power of temptation. He can grant anyone a wish that will give that person anything he desires. All he has to do is sign a little contract, using his own blood in lieu of ink. These wishes are much more powerful than ordinary wishes. Satan can also grant normal wishes (as a *Wish* spell) without the blood contract, but he rarely does so except to give some kind of assistance to those already doomed, or perhaps as a reward for faithful service. For anything important, he usually insists on a contract.

After seven years a person who has sold his soul to Satan for one of these wishes will surrender his soul to the devil (wishes notwithstanding). If the individual has wished for immortality, then the time of collection is whenever the individual decides that he has had enough of life, and voluntarily goes to hell (most such people do in the end), or else until the person dies by violence. (Immortality does not protect a person from being killed either by accident or by combat, although Satan will sometimes give a person some protection against this, such as magic armor or a wish or two, or something along those lines, because Satan prefers people to come to hell of their own free will.)

As for those who appear to be able to put with immortality, Satan has been known to give out a few unexpected surprises, which of course is not covered in the contract, in order to make the decision to go to hell easier by making life a little less pleasant (i.e., intolerable). If a person has not wished for immortality, then he may have more wishes besides the first one. Each one costs a year of the condemned one's remaining time.

For game purposes, it is best to have the contract actually written out, with identical copies for a character and the DM (which any involved player should study carefully before signing), because Satan is extremely literal, and he takes sadistic pleasure in twisting the intent of a contract by fulfilling its letter. Normally, a lawyer cannot be consulted on such a contract, and those who will give legal advice on such matters charge an exorbitant fee. The contract will typically be simply worded,

Belial	**Astaroth**
Very rare	*Very rare*
1	*1*
-4	*-6*
12" by himself, 24"/48" in chariot	*18" by himself, 9"/24" on dragon*
122 hit points	*155 hit points*
1%	*95%*
U, W	*unlimited*
1 bite	*1 (plus snake)*
3-18 plus poison	*1-8 (see snake entry in Monster Manual)*
+2 or better weapon to hit	*+3 or better weapon to hit*
80%	*90%*
Genius	*Supra-genius*
Lawful evil	*Lawful evil*
L (11')	*L (8')*
222	*Special*
All	*Special*

stating who gives and gets what. Once an individual accepts a wish from Satan, there is little chance of getting out of the contract, but it is possible. It is impossible to remove the compulsion to surrender one's soul to Satan unless the contract was signed while the individual was not in control of himself, in which case the contract is void and the wish is revoked. Satan will retaliate against the person responsible for this. However, as long as a person is satisfied with the contract, or at least as long as the person does not want to get out of the contract, there is no power in the universe —not a wish, not even God Himself (well, maybe He can, but He never has) — that can terminate the contract. On the other hand, if the condemned person decides that he wants to get out of the contract, there are steps he can take. He still cannot remove the compulsion to relinquish his soul, but he can enlist the assistance of some ultra-powerful being who will do battle with Satan on his behalf.

Unfortunately, once the person decides that he wants to terminate the contract, the time he has remaining in years is reduced to that many hours before Satan comes to collect, so one must act quickly after changing his mind. Also, any other devil will attempt to detain the condemned person, or failing that, to kill him. The devils cooperate with Satan in this one area because the reputation of all devildom is at stake. Naturally, a person cannot take any positive action to get out of a contract without first deciding to do so. Any cleric of at least Patriarch level can invoke the name of his deity to save the person's soul. However, they usually require some token of one's devotion to the cause of good, such as the performance of some appropriate quest, as the price of redemption. In any event, an *Atonement* spell must be cast on the person, and a *Quest* usually is, too (hence the requirement of an eighth-level cleric). The normal penalty for failure to complete the *Quest* is the immediate return of the person's soul to Satan.

Satan's allies include those covens of witches who worship him, most others who have sold their souls to him, and Belial. Sometimes Satan will ask one of the humans under his influence to perform some task for him. This is entirely voluntary (well, almost; it's not a good idea to cross Satan), and he will reward the person appropriately upon completion. His enemies include all those devils who acknowledge Asmodeus as lord of hell (i.e., all the other devils except Belial), all the demons, all the angels, all the gods and other powers of good, chaos, neutrality, or any combination thereof, and all the gods and other powers of lawful evil and neutral lawful or neutral evil who are allied with or support Asmodeus or any other enemy of Satan. (And you thought your character had problems!)

Belial (pronouncd BEE-lee-ul; the name means "Worthlessness"): At one time, Belial was the devil in charge of politicians, the supreme commander of the armies of hell and the personal lieutenant of Satan. He now spends most of his time on the run throughout the multiverse. In the *Lesser Key of Solomon*, a medieval grimoire which lists and describes most of the arch-devils, Belial is described as a beautiful angelic being riding a chariot of fire, and his voice is pleasant to listen to. Belial's Chariot of Fire has three times the hit points and capacity of a *Chariot of Sustarre*, but otherwise it is equivalent in all respects. If it is destroyed, he can replace it the next day. He has the power of *beguiling*, with -2 on the defender's saving throw. Those who wish to summon Belial must sacrifice something of great value to the summoner, because he wishes to avoid being summoned by a potential enemy, of whom he has many.

Once per turn or melee round, Belial may use any one of the following powers at will: *pyrotechnics, produce flame, wall of fire, light, read languages, read magic, detect invisible, locate object, invisibility, beguiling* (as noted above), *geas, restoration, raise dead,* (fulfull another's) *wish.* Once per day he can find a familiar of the summoner's choice automatically, and use a *symbol of fear* and a *symbol of stunning.*

His skill in dealing with politicians is almost equal to that of Asmodeus, although Asmodeus will attempt to punish anyone who he finds out has been consorting with Belial. As the former commander of the armies of hell, Belial still commands respect from the troops (somewhat like Napoleon). They will not directly act to harm him, and they will give him some assistance if they can do so without being caught by the other arch-devils. In the presence of both Asmodeus and Belial, the armies of hell will make an attempt to capture Belial, because they do not want the anger of the lord of hell upon them.

Belial's other allies are Satan and the former lord's followers. His enemies are the same as those of Satan, except for the armies of Hell as stated. However, the other devils have more enmity for Belial than for Satan, because Belial did a lot of Satan's dirty work when the two of them were in charge, and Belial seemed to enjoy harassing the devils.

Astaroth: This arch-devil is the treasurer of hell. He used to be third in the hierarchy behind Beelzebub and Adramelech, but now he acts rather independently of the current regime. Nominally he is still third, behind Asmodeus and Baalzebul, although neither of them would try to pull rank on Astaroth except in a dire emergency. Likewise, he never orders other devils around, but sometimes he will exchange favors if he wants something done. He appears as an awesome man-like being who stands 8 feet tall. He looks somewhat overweight and is richly dressed, reeking with filthy lucre.

He also reeks with a burning stench which will cause 1-6 points of fire damage to all creatures within 30', although a *ring of fire resistance* or its equivalent will protect a being against this. Still, one must make a saving throw vs. poison if within 10' or lose consciousness from the smell for 2-12 turns unless one can get a *neutralize poison* within one turn. (Losing consciousness in the presence of an arch-devil is not a very bright thing to do, and should be avoided.)

Astaroth usually rides a huge ancient red dragon, and he carries a large pit viper (giant poisonous snake) wrapped around his right arm. He can also strike with his left arm for 1-8 points of damage because, like most devils, he is left-handed.

Astaroth may once per turn or melee round use one of the following powers at will: *pyrotechnics, produce flame, wall of fire, ice storm, wall of ice, continual light, read languages, read magic, detect invisible, locate object, invisibility, dispel magic, shape change, beguile, rulership, charm monster, geas, restoration, raise dead,* (fulfill another's) *wish.* Once per day he may do each of the following: *legend lore, contact lower plane* and

precognition (90% accurate). His gaze causes confusion to his enemies (as spell).

Astaroth can create treasure, in the form of coins, gems or jewelry, at will. The DM will determine how much he has lying around, and how much can be carried away. He can teach any of the liberal arts very quickly. Astaroth is immune to psionic attack, and he cannot make a psionic attack.

Astaroth will willingly talk about the fall of the devils, but he does not speak of his own part in that event. In fact, he acts as though he was not subject to the fall, as if he were still working selflessly for the will of God and the good of mankind. Nevertheless, he is a devil of great power, and most devils give him great respect and a wide berth. One must take what he says to the contrary with a grain of salt.

Curiously enough, a number of sources state that Astaroth, in addition to his duties as the devil responsible for financial matters, is also the devil in charge of supervising the activities of devils in the United States. This would seem to indicate that the devils find the United States of great importance and stature, for no other nation has a devil of such rank overseeing it. He may also be partially responsible for all the commercial hype that Americans are subjected to. Then again, it could just be that mere men create such colossal inanity. No one knows for sure (except maybe God, in which case He will hold those culpable to account for their actions).

Last word: *The Lesser Key of Solomon* warns that when summoning Asmodeus, the summoner must not be wearing anything on his head, or Asmodeus will "deceive" him. That includes helms and other headgear. Forewarned is forearmed.

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Poison:

From AA to XX

by Charles Sagui

For every DM there comes a time when he must deal with the question of the use of poison by player characters and non-player characters other than assassins. Referees cringe at the thought of a single elf with a poison arrow felling the queen of chaotic dragons while similarly treated bolts from the crossbows of a party kill her guards, giving unlimited treasure for little risk.

And the same Dungeon Masters will smile as a hired assassin's crossbow twangs and the player character who has been abusing his privileges because he thinks he is unkillable fails his save and falls dead from a poison projectile. Some method must be found to allow for the presence of poison and yet restrict its abuse by player characters. Below is a suggested system for poison types, strengths, and prices plus a guide for placing restrictions on the use of poison by player characters and non-player characters.

First, poison use should be restricted to neutral or evil characters. No one who holds himself as good may use poison, no matter how chaotic he may be. This restriction applies only to the use of poison on human or humanoid types; characters are not restricted in the use of poison upon non-human monster types in the dungeon.

Basically, there are three classes which may freely trade for or buy poisons with few restrictions. Alchemists alone can distill and manufacture poisons. Any magic-user, thief, or even assassin who is found to be manufacturing poisons is told once to cease and desist; if he fails to do so, he will receive a visitor who will see to it that he stops permanently.

Alchemists learn to make poison at one strength per level of experience up to the fifth, beginning with level 0, strength AA. At sixth level an alchemist can make strength S (sleep) poison that may be sold to any class or type. After sixth level he learns one poison strength for each two experience levels, through strength J at level 16. Type X poison may be manufactured only by an alchemist of 20th level and type XX only by an alchemist of 25th (or higher) level. Alchemists through 4th level may make only ingested poisons; through 8th level they may make ingested plus water-soluble poisons; and through 16th level they may also produce contact-type poisons, including poison gas.

Assassins are the main customers for the alchemist's toxins. These are powerful and dangerous men, powerful enough to dictate to alchemists and society at large who may obtain or use poisons. They will be able to obtain (at a price) the type and strength of poison they desire. Assassins do not have the skill, training, or inclination to spend hours developing poisons, and even if one should desire to learn the craft of poison development, it is forbidden by the Guild.

Locksmiths are the ones who put poison needles and killer gases in chests and doors as traps. They received the blessing of the Assassins Guild so that the rich gentry could have their goods protected.

There are a few exceptions to this rule of thumb. All classes may use strength S sleep poison in all types in which this is available. Thieves may, upon payment of 500gp per experience level to the Assassins Guild, purchase poisons of strength AA (up to 60 vials per game-year), A (up to 30 vials per year), or B (up to 15 vials per year). Magic-users who desire a more potent missile weapon may, after gaining permission of the Guildmaster of Assassins and paying the Guild 1,000gp per experience level, coat darts or daggers with strength AA (30 vials per year) or A (15 vials per year) poisons.

Thieves and magic-users may purchase poisons according to the strengths they are allowed: One strength B poison costs as much as two strength A or four strength AA poisons. These poisons are rigidly controlled by the Assassins Guild; the thief or magic-user must go to a clerk at the Guildhall of Assassins and tell him what strength of poison he desires to purchase.

The clerk checks the records, and if the character is allowed to purchase this strength, the clerk will give him what amounts to a prescription for the type and amount. This is given to an alchemist, who provides the poison. Any alchemist found to be selling higher-strength poisons to thieves or magic-users than they are permitted, or selling anything besides S strength sleep poison to other classes, will receive an ominous visit from a high-level member of the Assassins Guild.

Specific prices listed for various poison types later in this article are given in terms of price (in gp) for each hit point of damage possible, up to the maximum for the specific poison. Thus, a water soluble strength A poison that does 1-10 points of damage will be priced at 750gp per vial (75gp per point up to the maximum of 10), and a similar poison that does only 1-8 damage will cost 600gp — even though either one (or both) might only actually do one point of damage when it is used. The base price given is the selling price; 75% of this price is the cost to the alchemist for material, components, and helpers.

If the party discovers vials of poison in the dungeon and recognizes them as poisons, they may use them on monsters, give them away freely, or coat their weapons. But if they sell the poison at any price or to any class, even only to assassins, they will be the objects of a "hit" financed by the alchemists. The alchemists decide what poisons or types they wish to make, except for special jobs for a particular assassin (which they will do but charge double for). In this way, the alchemists control the manufacture and assassins control the distribution of poison.

Poison is sold in small vials. One vial of poison is enough to coat six arrowheads, or eight darts, or twelve needles, or one dagger or spear point. Two vials will coat twice as many small weapons as one or, if preferred, a short sword. Three vials will coat a longsword or broadsword, four will coat a bastard sword, five a two-handed sword. Each coating of poison lasts for two successful hits on targets and the maximum coats allowable per blade at one time is five. When swallowed, one vial acts as one dose.

Orcs, goblinoids, and other semi-intelligent types which use sharp weapons may, if the DM desires, use poison, but they should use only strength AA, or at most A. They produce this from fungi or plants which they encounter, but they do not have the skills to distill a more powerful toxin. If such a creature is in the employ of a powerful higher-level character who is evil, there is a chance for more powerful poisons up to C or D in strength.

Damage from poison is taken gradually, at a constant rate of "*x*" points of damage per round, where *x* is the minimum damage figure for that poison. This damage is taken each melee round until the accumulated damage equals the number originally rolled on the damage die (or dice). For example, strength J poison that does 5-100 points of damage would deliver 5 points of damage per round until the damage rolled is reached or death occurs.

If a saving throw is made against poison of strength AA through J, the victim takes half the rolled damage, accumulating at the same rate as normal. A successful save against strength X or XX poison causes the victim to take damage equal to half of his original (fully healed and rested) hit points. Thus, a victim can save against these poisons and still die, if he was down to less than half of his hit points to begin with. A save vs. S sleep poison acts as a slow spell for three rounds. Undead cannot be affected by strength S poison except to be slowed in this fashion, and if they make a save they will not be affected by the poison. Creatures that are naturally immune to sleep will also not be affected by sleep poison.

As Gandalf said in *Lord of the Rings*, "A treacherous weapon is ever a danger to the hand." This should be applied to those using poisoned blades. Until it has been washed completely clean of all traces of poison, the weapon that has been coated is dangerous to the user. Each time the weapon is drawn or returned to the scabbard, the wielder must save by rolling his dexterity or less (+1 to the roll for water soluble or +3 for contact poison) or take full poison damage. The user of a poisoned weapon must also roll his dexterity or less in every other round (for water soluble), or every round (for contact poison), that the poisoned weapon is used. If a number higher than the character's dexterity is generated, a nick or touch has occurred and the full effect of the poison is taken. Even though two hits may have been made with a weapon and no more poison damage can be given to victims when a hit occurs, unless the blade is washed the user will be unlucky enough to be struck by a part of the poisoned blade where toxin still lingers. Weapons once poisoned, therefore, must be washed, put away or abandoned after use, or they are more dangerous to the user than the victim.

Poison may be applied only to ordinary iron or steel non-magical weapons. Silver will not hold poison; the magic radiating from such weapons will burn it off. Non-magic alloys of metal that are iron-based but are well made and have an advantage not associated with magic may be poison-treated. The process of treating metal with poison gives a dark discoloration to the blade. Any character seeing and recognizing this change in appearance, whatever his alignment, will join the fight against the user(s) of poison. Because of the limitations above, those monsters affected only by silver or magic weapons will be bothered only by contact or gas poison, unless they can be convinced to drink the ingested type.

Poison strengths and types

AA: This type of poison does less than six points of damage. Suggested potencies are 1-3 points (d6×½); 1-4 (d8×½); 1-5 (d10×½).

A: Does 6-10 points maximum damage. Suggested: 1-6 (d6); 1-8 (d8); 1-10 (d10).

B: Does 11-20 points maximum damage. Suggested: 2-12 (2d6); 2-16 (2d8); 3-18 (3d6); 2-20 (2d10); 1-20 (d20).

C: 21-30 points maximum. Suggested: 3-24 (3d8); 4-24 (4d6); 3-30 (3d10); 5-30 (5d6).

D: 31-40 points maximum. Suggested: 4-32 (4d8); 6-36 (6d6); 4-40 (4d10); 5-40 (5d8); 2-40 (2d20).

E: 41-50 points maximum. Suggested: 7-42 (7d6); 6-48 (6d8); 8-48 (8d6); 5-50 (5d10).

F: 55-60 points maximum. Suggested: 9-54 (9d6); 7-56 (7d8); 6-60 (6d10); 3-60 (3d20).

G: 61-70 points maximum. Suggested: 8-64 (8d8); 11-66 (11d6); 7-70 (7d10).

H: 72-80 points maximum. Suggested: 9-72 (9d8); 12-72 (12d6); 13-78 (13d6); 8-80 (8d10); 4-80 (4d20); 10-80 (10d8).

I: 81-90 points maximum. Suggested: 14-84 (14d6); 11-88 (11d8); 9-90 (9d10); 15-90 (15d6).

J: 91-100 points maximum. Suggested: 12-96 (12d8); 16-96 (16d6); 10-100 (10d10); 5-100 (5d20).

No alchemist will have for sale every type or strength of poison. If a certain poison is carried by an alchemist, he will carry only one poison of that type; for instance, an alchemist who had strength AA poison available might have either the 1-3 type or the 1-4 type, but not both.

Special poisons

X: Delivers 10 points of damage per round until death occurs.

XX: Instant death. This poison may be used only by a Master Locksmith, or by assassins with the Guildmaster's permission.

S: Sleep poison. Two rounds after being used, this acts as a *Sleep* spell on those creatures which are susceptible to sleep. No damage is taken.

If a *Neutralize Poison* or *Slow Poison* spell is cast after contact with the above special poisons, any effects already suffered cannot be reversed.

Antidotes

Antidotes are always ingested. They come in strengths AA

through X, plus a sleep antidote. Antidotes are more stable than poisons, delivering a set number of points of poison protection per dose. Strength AA antidote neutralizes 5 points of poison damage, strength A 10 points, B 20 points, C 30 points, etc., up to 100 points for strength J antidote. Strength S antidote affects only sleep poison but also gives a +3 bonus on saves vs. sleep spells for the next four turns. The effects of sleep poison can also be neutralized by the consumption of an antidote of strength C or greater. Strength X antidote acts as a *Neutralize poison* spell. Strength XX poison is also affected by strength X antidote, but in order to work the antidote must be taken no sooner than one round before and no later than one round after the XX poison is encountered.

The strength of the antidote taken is subtracted from the amount rolled for damage of the poison. If the resulting number is zero or less, the victim will suffer no adverse effects. The effects of an antidote last for four rounds after consumption. For example: A victim is struck by a sword coated with strength C poison doing 5-30 points damage, and a 15 is rolled for damage. The victim drinks a type A antidote in the next round, and ends up taking 5 points damage from the poison (for the round before the antidote was consumed) while the other 10 points of damage is neutralized. Two rounds later the same victim is hit once more by the poison blade and 25 points of damage is rolled; 10 more points of damage are neutralized by the antidote, which is still active, and the victim takes the remaining 15 points (assuming another dose of antidote is not consumed). Any damage taken before consumption of the antidote or any damage beyond the strength of the antidote is unaffected by the antidote.

Regular antidotes cost 200gp per point of damage neutralized, strength S antidote costs 2000gp per dose, and strength X antidote costs 30,000gp per dose.

Poison types

Ingested: All types of poison have full effect if swallowed, but only this type of poison can be mixed with food or drink to full effect. All other types of poison give off an odor or change the color of the material they are mixed with; also, other types of poison are diluted to one-quarter strength if mixed. Only ingested poisons of strength S are available to non-assassins. Strengths available to Assassins are AA — JJ plus S and X. Price to assassins is 50gp per maximum points of damage done by the poison. S strength poison, if available to adventurers, costs 500gp per dose. Strength X poison costs 7,500gp per dose to assassins.

Water soluble: This type of poison is applied to blades, arrows, darts, or other objects, and when it contacts blood or bodily fluids it dissolves and does the appropriate amount of damage. If the user of this type of poison is rained upon, falls into a pit of water, or takes a swim, the poisoned blade had better be waterproofed in a scabbard or wrapped in waterproof cloth, or else when he needs the envenomed steel he may find a rather ordinary blade without the extra damage he is counting on. Strength S poison of this sort is usable by all party members; this is the sort sold to magic-users and thieves (see above). Strengths available of this sort are AA — J plus X and S. Prices for most strengths are 75gp per maximum points of damage; strength S costs 750gp per vial, and strength X costs 11,250gp per vial.

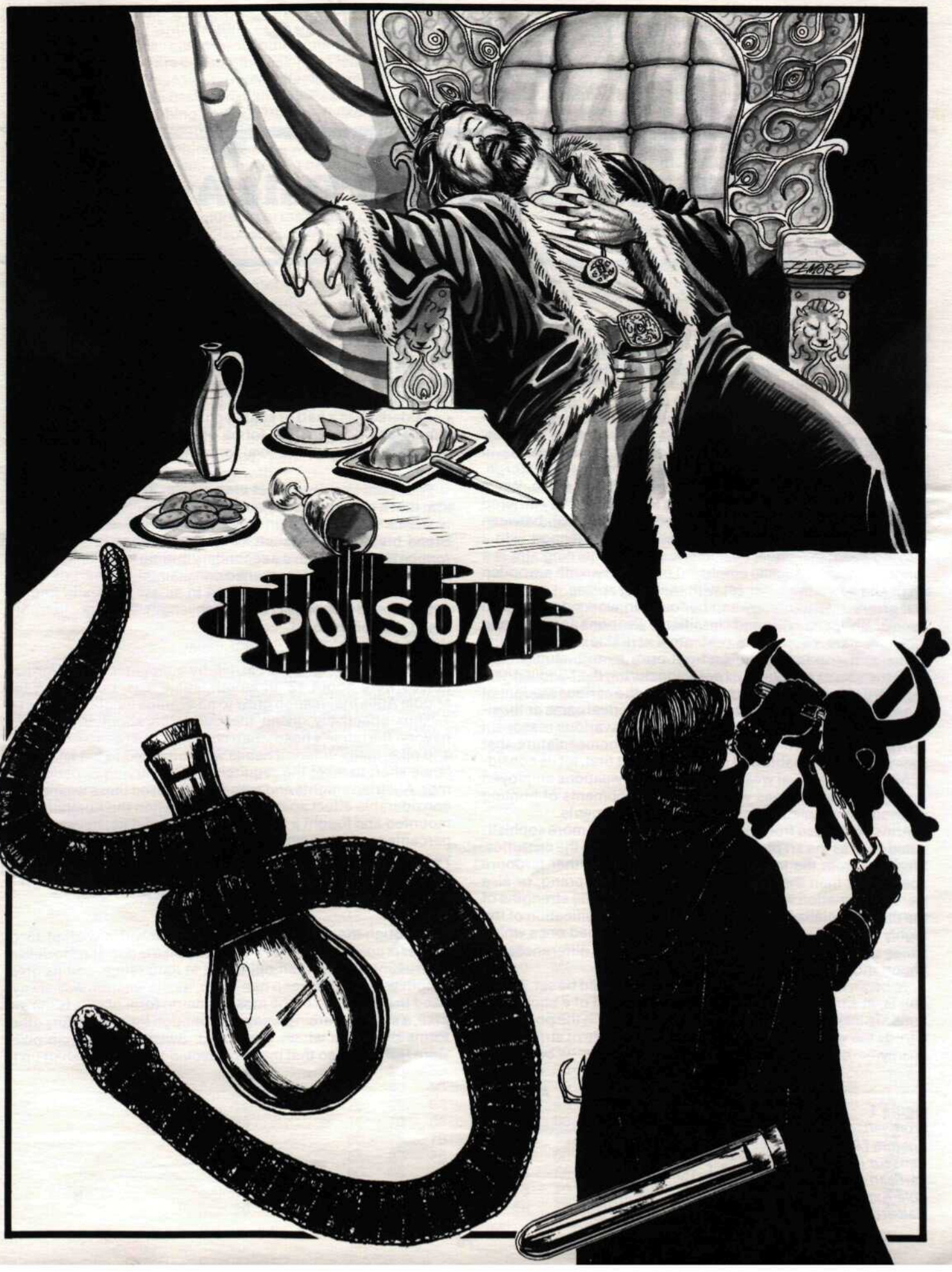
Skin contact: This type of poison takes effect upon contact with the naked skin. This type of poison is +2 to hit above the number needed for the weapon to hit, so that the poison may take effect even though no wound was sustained. This type of poison can do wonders as a trap, but a little goes a long way. Coins, gems and weapon hilts coated with strength XX skin-contact poison and scattered about a dungeon level will soon kill even a high-level party, but it will almost as surely kill a campaign.... Strengths available are AA - J plus X and XX. Regular skin-contact poison costs 200gp per maximum points of damage; strength X costs 30,000gp and strength XX costs 45,000gp per vial.

Poison gas: This type of poison is carried as a liquid, and as soon as it is touched by air it dissolves into a gas. This gas spreads into a cloud 5' × 5' and affects up to four creatures, after which time enough of the toxin has been absorbed to neutralize further effects. If more than four creatures are within the cloud, the DM must determine which four are closest to the center of the cloud, and they are affected. If all of the poison is not breathed in, it will last for five rounds, subject to wind, djinnis, etc.

This type of poison is used in more valuable traps, and if somehow obtained it is favored as a missile weapon by adventurers. It may also be set on the dungeon floor and activated by missile fire from long range. Because of the small size of the vial, any missile weapon fires on it at -3 to hit. Strengths available are F — J, plus S and XX. The price for regular poison gas is 300gp per maximum points of damage; strength S costs 3,000gp per vial and strength X costs 67,500gp per vial.

The above listed prices should be considered minimums. Prices may go up as materials or equipment become scarce for any given poison strength or type of poison. The high prices for more powerful strengths help reinforce the idea that high-level poisons should be used only by high-level assassins and then only on the most dangerous (i.e., high-level) targets; otherwise, there is no profit to the assassin involved.

Poisons from AA to XX
Original layout from issue #32, December 1979


POISON

FEB. 1979: #22

The Nomenclature of Pole Arms

by E. Gary Gygax

An astonishing number of different weapons were employed during the medieval period. What is nearly as surprising is the lack of uniformity of names by which these weapons are called. Seemingly, authors who should be authorities in this regard carelessly brand one sort of weapon under an entirely mistaken classification, thus confusing the uninformed reader and generally making identification difficult and uncertain. An outstanding example of this misnaming of weapons appears in *Warriors and Weapons of Early Times* by Niels M. Saxtorph, where an obvious morning star is identified as a mace. While the general use of both weapon types is the same, they differed sufficiently to make it rather important to distinguish between the two, viz.: a mace is usually a short-hafted weapon with a flanged head, the whole cast in one piece; a morning star is a longer weapon, typically employed by infantry, with a wooden shaft and head, the latter set with radiating spikes.

If errors in terminology can be found in works dealing with such easily identifiable and classifiable weapons as maces and morning stars, readers are cast into a veritable morass of disagreement — possibly out-and-out error — with studies that treat the scores of pole arms common during the Middle Ages.

Such confusion must be anathema to the serious student of the medieval period, be he historian or historical game enthusiast. After doing research on the subject for various reasons, I arrived at a system of classification and nomenclature that seems both reasonable and easy to use. But first, let us consider just what medieval weapons were. Most weapons employed during the Middle Ages were either developments of hunting weapons or adaptations of agricultural implements.

Arms developed from simple, basic forms into more sophisticated ones as the art of warfare developed during the centuries. Weapons from the late medieval period were either far more specialized than the models from which they sprang, or else were combination weapons trying to combine the strengths of the more specialized arms. In fact, it is the classification of the highly specialized weapons and the multi-formed ones which cause so much confusion amongst writers. The differences are important, and they must be made clear.

To begin with, a definition of a pole arm should be set. A pole arm is, in simplest terms, a weapon on the end of a stick. Pole arms are infantry weapons. The additional reach the pole gives affords the wielder of the weapon the advantage of striking the enemy — or holding the enemy at a distance — before he himself can be struck. The ultimate pole arm was the 18-21 foot pike — but an axe blade attached to a 5-foot-long haft is just as much a pole arm, so it is already evident to the reader just how wide a number of weapons is encompassed by the term.

The system of classification presupposes that any weapon considered has a haft or shaft length of not less than 5 feet. The simple and combination forms of each pole arm will be discussed in order, with special forms noted.

Spear

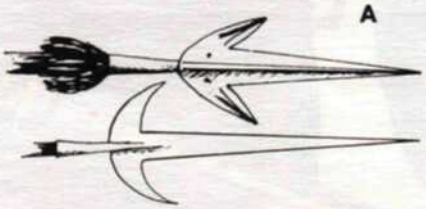
The spear is a dagger set atop a pole. It is so ancient a pole arm that it is not generally mentioned in the class, but the spear is such a weapon. It is principally a thrusting weapon, but if a broad blade is used (such as that often referred to as an *ox tongue*) it can also have a secondary cutting function, especially when the blade is lengthened considerably. Spears of 12 feet or so in length are often referred to as *ash spears* in English writings, and when they reach such length, they are often confused with pikes (q.v.).

Lance

A lance is a long spear carried by a mounted man. Norman lances were about 12' in length, some less, but later in the Middle Ages the weapon grew to an average length of about 14' — thus effectively giving the horseman about 10' of reach beyond the horse's head when charging. Just as with the spear and pike, many different heads were attached to the end of the lance shaft to meet the requirements of varying opponent armor. Austrian knights and men-at-arms used these weapons to considerable effect against the Swiss, when the Austrians dismounted and fought a Swiss force which did not have the high percentage of pikes which was common to Swiss armies in later years (cf. Battle of Sempach, 1386). For this reason, the lance should be mentioned in a description of pole arms. Generally it was a horseman's weapon and not a true footman's.

Pike

Although there is no set rule, any spear with a shaft of 15' or longer is considered to be a pike. The pike is designed to deliver a thrusting attack at an opponent at long range, and its great length was used to keep him there, as the weapon was always used in mass. One of the most common form of pike is the *awl pike*, a strictly piercing weapon, although there are many other forms of blades which were used. Swiss and German pikes were fashioned so that metal protected the wooden shaft up to



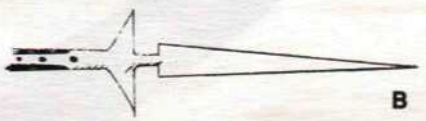


Figure 1
From left:
Spetum (A)
Ranseur (B)
Partisan (C)
Pole Axe (D)
Halberd (E)

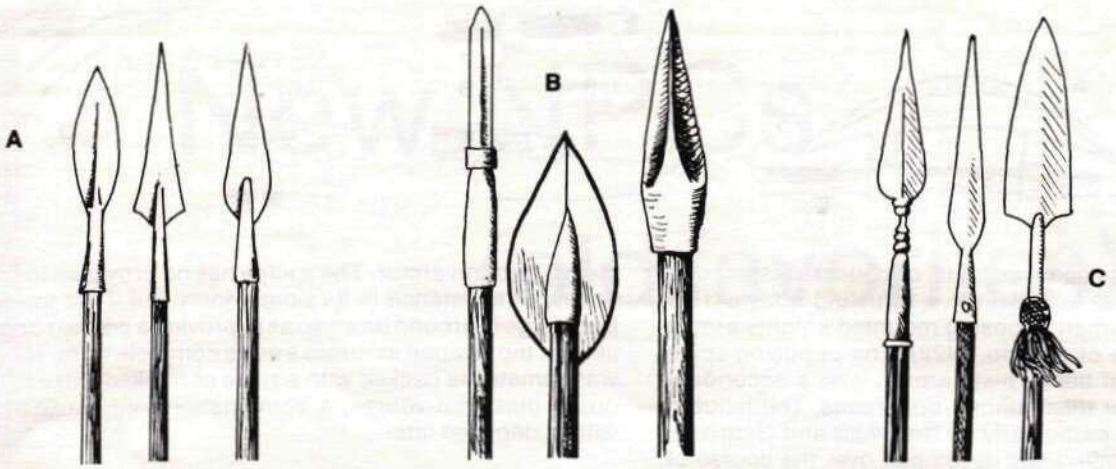


Figure 2
From left:
Spear (A)
Lance (B)
Pike (C)

2 feet from the head, so that an enemy could not easily lop the blade off and make the weapon useless.

We now come to the many specialized and combination forms of the dagger on a stick. This is not to say that all pole arms equipped with a spear head (dagger) should be considered as spears or variations thereof. To the contrary, this is an error all too common amongst writers treating pole arms, identifying the weapon by a secondary rather than a primary function, and losing all sense of what the weapon was for (as will be demonstrated later). The primary function of a spear is thrusting; thus, the specialized and combination pole arms belonging in the spear family should be primarily used as thrusting weapons.

Spetum

The spetum was probably designed to increase both offensive and defensive capabilities of a normal spear. To a sharp, tapering point two blades which point forwards at about 45° are added to provide secondary attack modes, deflect opponent weapons, and catch and hold opponents at a distance if penetration with one of the blades is not achieved. Weapons in this same class are the various *corseques* or *korsekes*.

Ranseur

At first glance, a ranseur appears to be a form of spetum, or vice versa, but the purpose of the design of the former weapon is more complex than the latter. A ranseur's secondary blades are backward-hooking projections set well below the large central blade. The spearing function of the weapon is apparent, and the deflection includes the trapping of opponent weapons in the space below the main blade, where a twist of the shaft would apply pressure from it or the secondary projections to either break the caught weapon or disarm its wielder. Additionally, the side projections provide both a means of holding an opponent at long range or of pulling mounted opponents off their horse. Similar weapons (or synonymous names) are *chauve souris, ransom, rhonca, roncie,* and *runka*.

Partisan

This form of pole arm is basically a spear — often with an ox tongue blade — to which a pair of small axe heads were added below the dagger blade. To the thrusting stab of the spear was added the defensive use of the side axe blades and their cutting/penetrating potential. Later versions of the partisan yielded a gradual change in the axe blades, so that they became almost unrecognizable as such. Typical of this is the *Bohemian earspoon,* a form of partisan where the axes have been changed to serve as piercing spikes (primarily to be used against plate armor) with a ranseur-like function. It is very common to see confusion between spetums, ranseurs, and partisans. This especially holds true of late-period partisans, where there are additions to the side blades of spetum-like projections and ranseur-like gaps for trapping opponent weapons.

Thus, the spear family is composed of the spear proper; the long spear, or pike; the spetum; the ranseur; and the partisan. All weapons in this class are basically daggers atop a sturdy pole, with trimmings added to make the weapon more efficient in one way or another.

The pole axe

The axe took many forms and was combined with many basic forms of weapon to make a prolific family, but some of the pole arms bearing the name do not really belong to the genre. The axe has two basic head forms, broad and narrow. The latter form is usually thicker than the other, in order to give it the necessary weight. A related form of the axe is the cleaver, a butchering tool which was adapted for military use also. Many pole arms in the axe and cleaver families also had spear points to provide some secondary thrusting capability, but again the primary use of the weapons of these types was chopping at one's opponent rather than thrusting toward him.

Strictly speaking, a pole axe is nothing more than an axe head of any sort set upon a long haft in order to deliver an earlier and more forceful blow. It can be double-bitted, backed by a spike, and/or topped off with a dagger (spear) point, but it is still recognizable as an axe.

Halberd

This form of a pole axe is seen as a convex-headed broad axe in early examples, but the head is set at a convenient angle (considering the point where the blade is most likely to impact upon an enemy), so this alone makes it quite distinct from an ordinary long-hafted axe. The whole weapon often reached 8 feet in length. It was also always topped with a fairly long spear point and backed by a spike, which was often angled or hooked

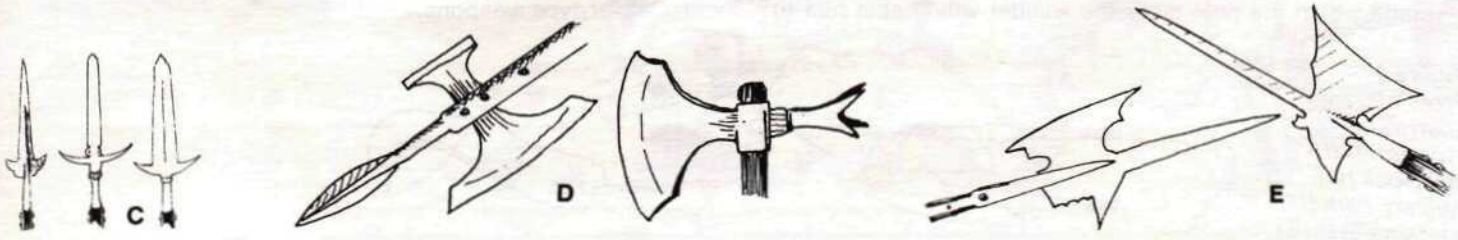
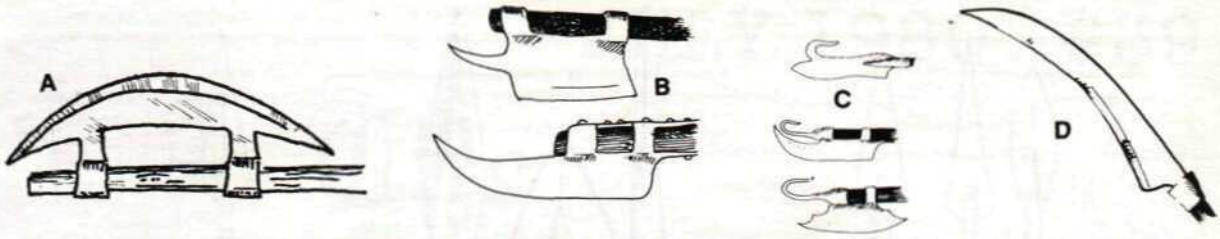


Figure 3
From left:
Bardiche (A)
Voulge (B)
Lochaber Axe (C)
Fauchard (D)



slightly downward. The spear point is, of course, designed to keep opponents at bay and deliver a thrusting attack. This proved quite useless when opposing mounted knights armed with lances (cf. Battle of Arbedo, 1422). The opposing spike was for penetration of heavy plate armor, with a secondary function as a hook for dismounting opponents. The halberd was used extensively, particularly by the Swiss and Germans, and considerably modified and developed over the course of two centuries. Concave blades, some very pronounced, were not uncommon, and some halberd heads were made smaller (as the *piercing axe*) in order to better penetrate armor. Many of these weapons pictured in texts on arms are *not* battle arms, but rather fanciful parade arms. There are examples of *bills* and *voulges* which are called halberds, but the discerning reader will note the differences in form, especially when keeping in mind the weapon's possible use. According to C. W. C. Oman, the English *brown bill* was a halberd in all respects save the back spike.

Bardiche

This very broad and heavy axe links the pole axes to the pole cleavers as a sort of transitional step between the two forms, although its only obvious use is as a military arm. A bardiche head ranged from about 2 feet to over 3 feet in length, and it was attached to its haft with two rings or a single one in those examples where the blade is shorter and backed with a hammer head or spike. The bardiche in all of its forms was very heavy and cumbersome — more so by far than a halberd — and was used principally in Eastern Europe.

As stated, the family of axes set on poles for use in war overlaps into many other weapon forms, but its only true members are the pole axe; the halberd (possibly the brown bill); and the bardiche. The related cleaver-type weapons are so similar in function, however, that they can almost be treated as pole axes.

The pole cleaver

It seems quite likely that some outraged peasant fastened his meat cleaver to the end of a stave in order to protect himself and his family, and thereby created a weapon form which was to be widely used in both Europe and the British Isles for several centuries. The same derivation holds true for the majority of the other pole arms which will be discussed; they are simple agricultural tools converted to a warlike use, and their form is easily distinguishable and identifiable until they become so combined and sophisticated as to prove some difficulty in easy classification. Even this latter transition is not too difficult, however, if the reader is well versed in the basic forms of each basic peasant tool-cum-weapon.

Voulge

Place a hefty cleaver at the end of a long, stout shaft, and the leverage which the pole gives the wielder will enable him to cleave through armor. The voulge has no provision to keep the enemy at a distance in its simple form, but if the top front or back edge is ground down so as to provide a pointed or dagger-like tip, the weapon assumes a more complete form. The voulge was sometimes backed with a spike or hooked spike to make a crude *guisarme-voulge*, a combination-form weapon which will be depicted later.

Lochaber axe

In its early crude forms this weapon is the same as a voulge. Development of the lochaber axe added a hook to the weapon, either as a tip or a blade backing, and in this form it is nearly identical to the guisarme-voulge. To all intents and purposes the two forms are so nearly the same as the types of voulges they resemble that there can be no real differentiation between them as far as function and form are concerned.

Continental Europe developed the pole cleaver as the voulge, while the Scots in the British Isles developed the same thing and called it the Lochaber axe. Both types of pole arms were developed to deliver a powerful cleaving blow, just as the pole axe family were designed to do. Both forms had secondary functions which were aimed at keeping enemies at a distance and/or dismounting them.

Fauchard

This weapon is a development of the scythe or sickle. Set upon a long pole, the curving blade of a fauchard could be used for both cut and thrust, although it is to be strongly suspected that it did neither too well. Furthermore, the weapon offered little in the way of parrying or catching/holding and had no provision for dismounting opponents in its early and more common form. Later models include a back hook to dismount horsemen, but the weapon was still not efficient, and it passed out rather quickly, although its combination form, the *fauchard-fork* remained.

Glaive

Having employed just about everything else, there was no reason not to add the single-edged knife at the end of a staff also. This family of arms is as small as the fauchard family and about as efficient.

The glaive is a knife-bladed spear. It has the thrusting function of the spear and the secondary cutting function of the convex blade of the knife. The weapon was rapidly enlarged in the blade in order to give it a greater cutting function as well as a cleaving attack. As with a spear or fauchard, however, it was not overly effective at holding opponents back, nor did it have piercing or dismounting capabilities, so modifications produced the *glaive-guisarme*, which is discussed in the combination-arms section. The increase in the size of the blade of these weapons brought some to a point where they nearly merged with cleaver-type weapons.

Figure 4
From left:
Glaive (A)
Guisarme (B)
Bill Hook (C)
Military Fork (D)
Morning Star (E)

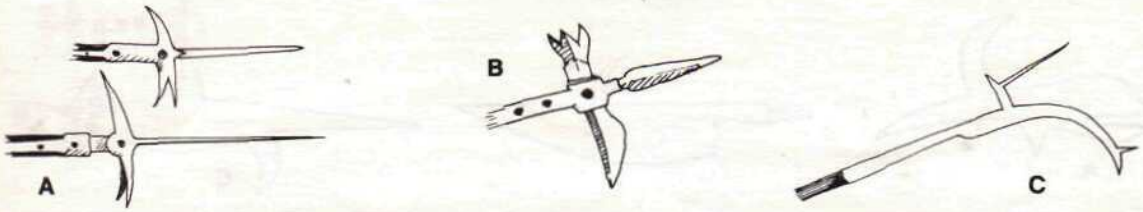


Figure 5
From left:
Lucern Hammer (A)
Bec de Corbin (B)
Fauchard-Fork (C)

Guisarme

Medieval peasants discovered that their pruning hooks made reasonably effective pole arms. The provocation which necessitated such development was undoubtedly considerable, but the upshot was likely to have been as unsatisfactory as having no weapons. Pole arms of this sort, called guisarmes, were soon modified into highly efficient combination weapons. This class includes most *couteaux de breche*, although some identified as such are glaive-guisarmes (q.v.).

The guisarme was furnished with a sharp cutting edge along its convex side, probably from reverse spike to hook. The spike, of course, could be used to penetrate armor when the weapon was swung, and the curved hook provided an ample means of pulling horsemen to the ground. Deficiencies in this form of pole arm are apparent — no spear point for thrusting and only one projection for penetrating. The guisarme was soon combined with other forms of peasant weapons to make a second generation of highly effective, all-purpose pole arms.

Bill hook

The English bill hook was almost exactly the same as the French guisarme, but its concave (hook) edge was the sharp one, and rather than a straight back spike it typically had an L-shaped tine projecting forward. This arrangement was slightly more effective than the European guisarme.

Military fork

The lowly hay fork was straightened and strengthened to provide a very potent weapon, the military fork. This pole arm had two efficient piercing points, for holding off an enemy, and sometimes a shorter third tine in the crotch of the fork, so that opponents were channeled into a third attack. The major drawback to this pole arm was its lack of effective penetrating power with respect to heavily armored targets. The fork principle was soon combined with other pole arms to form very efficient tools of war.

Special cases

A few other designs can also be mentioned here, more or less in passing, as they pertain to weapons which are not true pole arms, but their size is such that they are sometimes considered in the general class.

The threshing flail, a wooden handle with another billet of wood attached to it by a swivel or several links of chain, was easily adapted and modified to become a ghastly weapon. Horsemen commonly employed a short-handled flail with one or more chains ending in smooth or spiked iron balls. The peasant's tool made a far more effective weapon when swung by a strong man. From a heavy shaft of about 3 to 4 feet in length was hung one or two rods of metal shod and spiked wood or iron. The whole weapon was over 5 feet long and had tremendous penetration and crushing power.

The other weapon which is a borderline case is the morning star. This club adaptation was typically a heavy wooden haft from 3' to 5' or more in length, atop which was set a cylinder, barrel, or truncated cone, also of wood, metal-bound, and set with vicious metal spikes. Also called the holy water sprinkler (or *godentag* in the Low Countries), it was a favorite of the peasants, for it was easy to make and could lay low the best armored opponent at a blow. For some time it was used extensively by the Swiss, although the halberd eventually replaced it. The weapon was often tipped with a spear point in its longer form, so that some models were long enough to be pole arms. Some military picks were also pole-mounted, having shafts of 5 feet or greater length.

There are also two pole arms which were certainly developed purely as weapons. There is a resemblance between the two, but they are separate and distinct.

Lucern hammer

This weapon is very similar to the halberd, but the spike on its end was generally longer than that of a halberd, and instead of an axe head the Lucern hammer featured a smaller, hammer-like head with three prongs. Evidently this function was not as efficient against armor as the axe blade, for it was replaced by the halberd amongst the ranks of the Swiss after the 14th century.

Bec de corbin

At first glance, a bec de corbin might be mistaken for a Lucern hammer, but important functional differences can be noted. The bec de corbin was used late in the Middle Ages and into the Renaissance by knights and nobles, *not* by commoners. Its heavy, crow's-beak blade was designed to puncture the heavy plate armor common to upper-class warriors. In this weapon the beak is the major feature. This is backed by a flat hammer head, or by a clawed head somewhat similar to a Lucern hammer's, and the end spike is more blade-like and far shorter than the awl spike of the Lucern hammer; for the latter weapon was not so specialized.

Combination weapons

These varieties of pole arms were developed to compensate for weakness of simpler weapons or to enhance already powerful ones. Technically, all pole arms with a secondary spear tip for thrusting can be considered combination weapons. However, this sort of improvement was done so often and could be done so easily to most weapons that it is necessary to ignore secondary spear tips when classifying pole arms. By the same token, a partisan could be considered a combination weapon, but since it was primarily used as a thrusting weapon I believe it should be classified as part of the spear family.

Fauchard-fork

There were two general forms of this combination weapon. The first followed the typical fauchard form, with a single spike

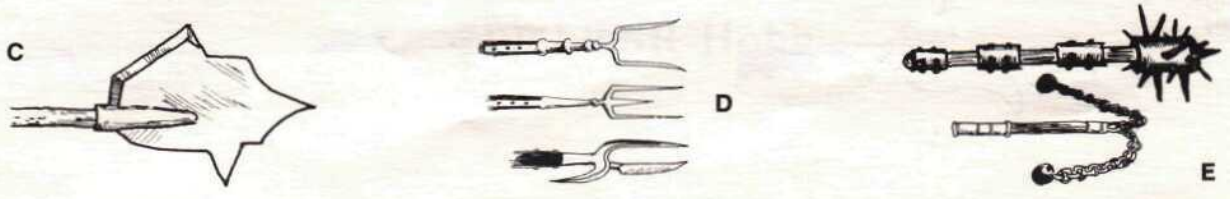
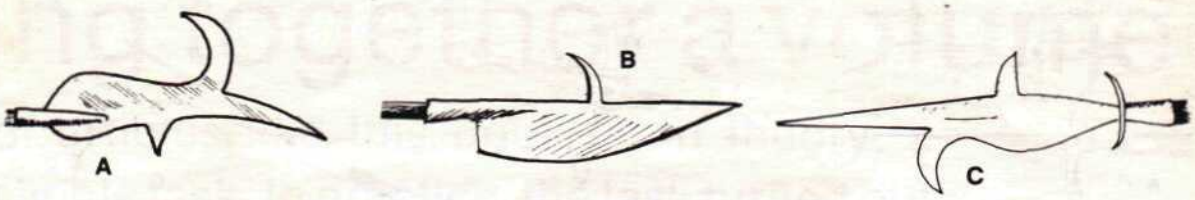


Figure 6
From left:
Fauchard-Guisarme (A)
Glaive-Guisarme (B)
Bill-Guisarme (C)



set to project from the back of the scythe blade. The second reversed the scythe blade so as to have its concave cutting edge face toward the opponent, the blade being more curved and sickle-like, and a spike tipping the pole end (or projecting from the scythe blade).

Fauchard-guisarme
This weapon is nothing more than a scythe blade backed by a heavy hook for dismounting opponents.

Glaive-guisarme
To the heavier and longer glaive head was added a guisarme hook to enable the wielder to jerk horsemen from their seats.

Guisarme-voulge
This pole arm is similar to the Lochaber axe, but the hook is formed from the blade of the voulge itself, not added separately. Guisarme-voulges featured the pointed tip or spike so as to make the weapon as all-purpose as possible.

Bill-guisarme
There are quite a number of designs of the bill-guisarme. Each type has the following features: 1) a sharp spear or awl point; 2) a large hook formed from the body of the weapon; 3) a back spike for armor penetration; and 4) several sharpened edges. Some forms of the bill-guisarme have a sufficiently heavy blade and cutting edges placed so that they are actually voulge-like. This form of pole arm persisted the longest of all save the pike and the halberd, for it was certainly efficient in all functions — piercing, holding off, cutting, penetrating, dismounting, and cleaving. The *scorpion* is a typical form of bill-guisarme.

One final thing needs comment. Sometimes a weapon with an added feature is identified as the added part rather than as the major weapon. For example, an axe head attached to the end of what is basically a spear (i.e., the partisan) is not called a pole axe, for the length of the shaft and the predominate employment of the point make it rather obviously a thrusting weapon with added secondary functions. A glaring example of misidentification is found in Stone's *A Glossary of the Construction, Decoration and Use of Arms and Armor*. Therein, the author shows a halberd with a fork tip rather than the usual dagger/spear point and identifies it as a military fork. Now, were the shaft of the weapon 8 feet or more in length, this might be proper, but it is a halberd-sized pole, and the weapon is simply a halberd with an incidental fork atop it.

Confusion regarding certain combination weapons of the fauchard-glaive voulge-guisarme-bill types is certainly understandable, and care must be taken in identifying such weapons. Careful examination of the length of the shaft and the shape of the head will give clues as to its primary uses in combat, and hence its identity.

The pole arm was developed in order to put infantry on even terms with cavalry. This it did admirably in the hands of well trained, disciplined formations such as those of the Swiss (who mixed pike, halberd/Lucern hammer/morning star, and crossbow/arquebus in almost equal proportions — 40-40-20 as an average), who could hold the best of European cavalry at bay with laughable ease in pike square. The Germans emulated the Swiss with close to the same success, and most other European armies fielded large bodies of pole-armed infantry (with something less than great success in most cases). The reason for the proliferation of the pike was that it proved the most useful for keeping horsemen at a distance. (Swiss pikemen did not ground the pike butt to accept a cavalry charge, but rather held the rear part of the shaft higher than the front, so the points which glanced off armor would not go uselessly into the air but would be forced downward into rider or mount — or, at worst, into the ground to form a barrier.) Other pole arms gave way to pike and halberd for one or two reasons. Those with massive heads were not as efficient as the pike; when their shafts were lengthened past a certain limit, they were too cumbersome to wield. (Spear-type pole arms were lengthened to pikes and were then called just that — there are ox-tongued and spetum-like heads, but the pike shaft is too long for useful employment of ranseur or partisan heads.) Those which were shortened for use as cleaving weapons were not as efficient as the halberd, or were changed so that they became almost indistinguishable from the halberd (typically guisarme-voulge forms).

The evolution of the pole arm is of great interest, as it reflects the trends in armor and tactics in medieval warfare. It also is of great help in understanding why battles were fought as they were and can help to explain some of the outcomes. My system of nomenclature is derived from early reading of the *Encyclopedia Brittanica* and Ffoulkes' book (see below). Further study and careful observation of weapons has brought it to its current state — by no means positively final, complete or unimpeachable, but nonetheless useful and logical for accurate identification and naming of medieval pole arms.

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Figure 7
Guisarme-Voulge, different types

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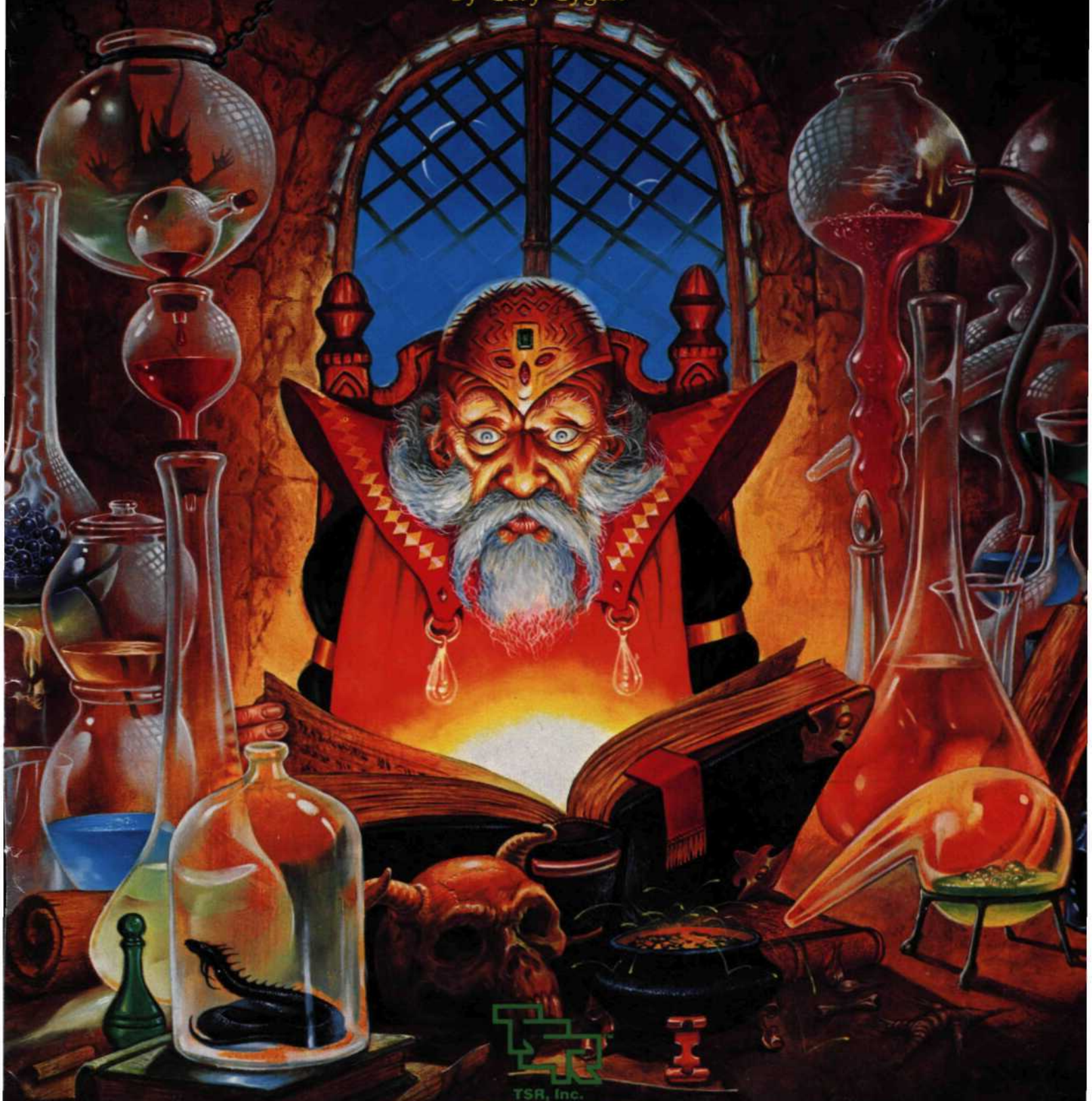

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